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The Tonsure

The Clerical Haircut

according to the Traditional
Catholic Rite of Holy Orders



by A. Biskupek, S.V.D.
Mission Press, 1954

Imprimi Potest May 4, 1942 Charles Michel, S.V.D. Provincial
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Archbishop of Chicago

Tonsure, from the Latin *tonsura*, denotes the cutting of the hair as well as the shaven crown worn by clerics as a distinctive mark of their state.

The origin of the tonsure must probably be sought in the custom prevailing among the Romans of shaving the head of a slave. Confessors of the faith were in some cases treated in the same manner out of contempt and mockery. To proclaim themselves slaves of Christ monks at a very early date began to shave their heads. Toward the beginning of the sixth century clerics gradually adopted the custom of the monks, however in a modified form, not shaving the whole head, but leaving a narrow crown of hair. In this form the tonsure is still worn by members of some religious orders. Generally, however, it was greatly reduced in size until it now resembles a half-dollar coin. In some countries, where Catholics form a minority among a non-Catholic population, as in the United States, the tonsure is not worn.

In the beginning no special rite was employed for the bestowal of the first tonsure. When a man decided to devote himself to the service of God and was assigned to the personnel of a certain church, he began to wear the tonsure. In the course of time suitable ceremonies were developed for the adoption into the clerical state. For a long time these ceremonies formed part of the rite, by which the first minor order was conferred, and it was probably only in the eighth century that the bestowal of the first tonsure became a separate rite. The wearing of the tonsure was made obligatory for all clerics during the Middle Ages.

Tonsure is not an order, since no office and no spiritual power is conferred by it. It is a sacred rite, by which a layman is received into the clerical state, and the prerequisite for the reception of orders.

The word cleric is derived from the Greek *kleros*, which means

portion or inheritance. The choice of the term is suggested by the words of God addressed to the tribe of Levi, by which the clerics were typified: "You shall possess nothing in their land, neither shall you have any portion among them. I am your portion and inheritance in the midst of the children of Israel" (Numb 18, 20). St. Jerome, commenting on the passage, thus interprets the word cleric: "They are called clerics, because they are the portion of the Lord and because the Lord is their portion." The Lord has chosen the clerics for His special service, and they have freely accepted the choice. In order to give themselves with wholehearted and undivided attention to the service of God, they renounce the pursuit of secular vocations. However, they are not left without the means of living in conformity with their state, for "they that serve the altar partake with the altar. So also the Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live by the gospel" (1 Cor. 9,13 f). As in the Old Testament the Levites were supported by the rest of the people by the payment of tithes, first fruits, and a definite share of the sacrifices, so priests are supported by the faithful, the chosen people of the New Testament.

The word *clergy*, strictly speaking, designates all persons who have received the tonsure, even though they are not priests; however, popular usage commonly restricts its meaning to priests only.

Tonsure may be conferred on any day and at any hour of the day. If tonsure is conferred during Mass, this is done:
 Saturdays of Ember weeks and Holy Saturday: after the Kyrie.
 Saturday before Passion Sunday: after the Introit.
 On other days, if the Mass has Gloria: after the Kyrie; if the Mass has no Gloria: after the Introit.

The candidates present themselves for ordination dressed in a cassock. On their left arm they carry a surplice and in their right hand a burning candle.

The Rite

The Call. The bishop, with his mitre on, sits on the faldstool before the middle of the altar. The archdeacon bids the candidates come forward; the notary reads their names:

Let those who are to be promoted to the first clerical tonsure come forward: N. N. etc.

Each one answers *adsum*, i.e., present, goes before the altar and kneels, holding the burning candle in his right hand. The bishop rises and prays:

Prayer

V. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

R. From henceforth, now, and forever.
 V. Our help is in the name of the Lord.
 R. Who made heaven and earth.

Let us pray, dearly beloved brethren, to the Lord Jesus Christ for these His servants, who for the sake of His love hasten to offer the hair of their heads. May He bestow upon them the Holy Spirit, to preserve in them forever the spirit of piety and protect their hearts against the entanglements of the world and worldly ambition. And as they are changed in outward appearance, may His right hand grant them an increase of virtue, deliver their eyes from all blindness, spiritual and human, and bestow on them the light of everlasting grace. Who lives and reigns with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

The Cutting of the Hair. Here the choir begins and continues the following antiphon and psalm (Ps. 15, 1-5):

Antiphon

It is Thou, O Lord, that wilt restore my inheritance to me.

Psalm

Preserve me, O Lord, for I have put my trust in Thee. I have said to the Lord: Thou art my God, for Thou hast no need of my goods.

To the saints who are in His land, He hath made wonderful all my desires in them.

Their infirmities were multiplied: afterward thy made haste.

I will not gather together their meetings for blood offerings, nor will I be mindful of their names by my lips.

The whole antiphon is repeated:

It is Thou, O Lord, that wilt restore my inheritance to me.

While the psalm is being sung, the candidates are tonsured. The bishop cuts some hair from the head of each, in five places, so as to form a cross: in front and in the back, above the right and the left ear, and from the crown of the head. At the same time the bishop pronounces the following words, which the candidate repeats after him:

The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup. It is Thou that wilt restore my inheritance to me (Ps. 15,5).

Prayer. Having tonsured all, the bishop, miter off, rises and facing the candidates prays:

Let Us Pray

Grant, we beseech Thee, almighty God, that these Thy servants whom, prompted by divine love, we have tonsured today, may always remain in Thy love, and do Thou keep them forever without stain. Through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

The choir now sings the following antiphon and Psalm 23. As soon as thy have begun, the bishop, miter on, seats himself.

Antiphon

These shall receive a blessing from the Lord and mercy from God their Savior, because they are the generation of them that seek the Lord.

Psalm

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof: the world and all they that dwell therein.

For He hath founded it upon the seas: and hath prepared it upon the rivers.

Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord: or who shall stand in His holy place?

The innocent in hands and clean of heart, who hath not taken his soul in vain nor sworn deceitfully to his neighbor.

He shall receive a blessing from the Lord and mercy from God his Savior.

This is the generation of them that seek Him, of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob.

Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates: and the King of glory shall enter in.

Who is this King of glory? The Lord who is the strong and mighty; the Lord mighty in battle.

Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates; and the King of glory shall enter in.

Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King

of glory.

Glory be, etc.

As it was, etc.

Here the whole antiphon is repeated.

These shall receive a blessing from the Lord and mercy from God their Savior, because they are the generation of them that seek the Lord.

The bishop, miter off, rises, turns to the altar and says:

Let Us Pray

The assistants: Let us bend our knees.

R. Arise.

Turning toward the tonsured he prays:

Here, O Lord, our humble prayer, and vouchsafe to bless these Thy servants. In Thy holy name we now invest them with the garb of holy religion. May they, by Thy help, remain faithful in Thy Church and merit to attain life everlasting. Through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

The Investiture with the Surplice. The bishop now seats himself and, miter on, invests the candidates with the surplice, saying to each:

May the Lord clothe thee with the new man, who is created according to God in justice and true holiness.

The bishop rises, with his miter off, and prays:

Let Us Pray

Almighty, eternal God, forgive our sins and deliver these Thy servants from all slavery of secular fashions, so that, as they renounce the ignominy of worldly style, they may possess Thy grace forever. And as we make them wear the likeness of Thy crown upon their heads, may they, by Thy help, merit to attain within their hearts the everlasting inheritance. Who with the Father and the Holy Spirit livest and reignest, God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

Admonition. The bishop seats himself and, miter on, addresses the candidates as follows:

Dearly beloved sons, you should consider that today you have been placed under the jurisdiction of the Church and have received the privileges of clerics. Take care, lest you forfeit them through you fault. Strive to be pleasing to God by modest dress, becoming demeanor, and good works. May He grant it to you by His Holy Spirit. R. Amen.

Procedure after an ordination.

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The Minor Orders

The Order of Porter
The Order of Reader
The Order of Exorcist
The Order of Acolyte

**according to the Traditional
Catholic Rite of Holy Orders**



by A. Biskupek, S.V.D.
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Archbishop of Chicago

The worthy conduct of divine worship renders necessary many distinct functions which stand in a more or less intimate relation to the central act of divine worship, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Such functions are, for instance, to take care of the place of worship and of the many things needed for the Holy Sacrifice, to instruct the people and admit them to the divine services, to keep out unworthy persons, to supervise the congregation so that due order and reverence may be observed by all, to serve at Mass, etc. In ancient times, when the faithful formed small minorities in the midst of a pagan population not well disposed toward Christianity, it was of the utmost importance that such offices should be entrusted to thoroughly reliable men. For this reason special orders were introduced by the Church, and men were ordained by a sacred rite for the worthy discharge of these offices. At what time this was done cannot be established with certainty. But we know that Pope Cornelius, in a letter written to Fabian, Bishop of Antioch, about the year 250, mentions that four minor orders as we have them today. He writes that in the Church of Rome were at the time 46 priests, 7 deacons, 7 subdeacons, 42 acolytes, 52 exorcists, lectors, and porters.

Accordingly, the four minor orders are:

1. [The Order of Porter \(The Ostiarate\)](#)
2. [The Order of Reader \(The Lectorate\)](#)
3. [The Order of Exorcist \(The Exorcistate\)](#)
4. [The Order of Acolyte \(The Acolytate\)](#)

The historical development of these orders was not the same throughout the Church and, moreover, their functions underwent considerable modifications according to the exigencies of the times. Gradually they lost their original importance. But, although

for centuries already many of the functions of the minor orders are performed by laymen, the orders have remained. They now form a fitting preparation for the major orders, and recall the fact that, after all, the priest is the responsible guardian of the house of God and of all the functions performed therein; and that, if laymen are employed in rendering such services, the priest must see to it that worthy persons are chosen and that they perform their offices in the proper way.

These four orders are called minor orders because of their lesser importance and dignity when compared to major orders; they are not sacraments. According to the present discipline of the Church, only candidates who have the intention of becoming priests are permitted to receive minor orders. However, if in the course of time a minorite changes his mind and decides not to become a priest, he is at liberty to choose another state of life without being under any further obligations in consequence of the orders received.

Minor orders are conferred on Sundays and double feasts; also outside Mass, but always in the morning. Not more than two minor orders may be received on the same day; nor is it allowed that tonsure and a minor order be received by the same candidate on the same day.

The rite of conferring these orders comprises the following features:

1. **The Call.** The candidates are called by name to come forward; they in turn answer, "*Adsum*," i.e. "Present." This is to show, on the one hand, that the promotion to an ecclesiastical office must come from the ecclesiastical superiors, and on the other hand, that no one is forced to accept such an office, but offers himself of his own free will.
2. **The Instruction.** It contains a statement of the various duties of the order and then points out the particular obligations arising from its reception.
3. **The Bestowal of the Order.** This is the essential part of the rite and consists in the so-called tradition of instruments, i.e., the handing over to the candidates of the symbols of their office and in the accompanying words of the bishop.
4. **The Prayer.** It is a prayer for the ordained, that they may faithfully discharge the duties of their office.

The candidates present themselves for ordination dressed as clerics, in cassock and surplice. In their right hand they carry a burning candle.

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The Order of Porter

The Ostiariate -- the 1st of the Minor Orders

**according to the Traditional
Catholic Rite of Holy Orders**



by A. Biskupek, S.V.D.
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Archbishop of Chicago

In the Old Testament Levites were appointed to keep the gates of the tabernacle and later of the temple; they also had charge of the sacred vessels (1 Paral. 9, 26). The sacredness of the house of God in the New Testament and of the vessels used for the celebration of the divine mysteries calls for at least the same care and safekeeping. The ostiarii were the doorkeepers or porters of the church. The word is derived from the Latin ostium, the door.

The office was of special importance during the times of persecution. Reliable men were needed to inform the faithful of the time and place of the divine services, to open and lock the doors, to keep out undesirables. In later times the ringing of bells sufficed for the purpose of informing the faithful of the time of the divine services, since there was no further need of informing them of the place.

Opening of the book for the preacher, mentioned as one of the duties of the porter, must also be understood in the light of earlier times. Those ancient rolls were not as handy as a modern book, but often heavy and of considerable size, and the place for reading could not be found as readily. The porter, therefore, would carry the book to the ambo and open it for the preacher. In the course of time the care of the sacred vessels was also entrusted to porters, which gave the order added importance.

It seems probable that up to the fourth century porters were not ordained, but simply appointed. In our days the duties of porters are usually performed by sacristans, ushers, and janitors.

If the ostiariate is conferred during Mass, this is done:

Saturday before Passion Sunday: after the Kyrie.

Holy Saturday: after the Gloria.

On other days, if the Mass has Gloria: after the Gloria; if the Mass has no Gloria: after the Kyrie.

The Rite

The Call. The bishop, with his miter on, sits on the faldstool before the middle of the altar. The archdeacon bids the candidates come forward; the notary reads their names:

Let those come forward who are to be ordained to the order of porter: N. N. etc.

Each one answers, *adsum*, goes before the altar and kneels, holding the burning candle in his right hand.

The Instruction. When all are assembled, the bishop address them as follows:

Dearly beloved sons, you are about to receive the order of porter. Behold what you must do in the house of God. The duty of the porter is to ring the bells, to open the church and sacristy, and to open the book for the preacher. Take good care, therefore, lest anything in the church perish through your negligence. Open the house of God to the faithful at the appointed hours, and always shut it to unbelievers.

As you open and shut with material keys the visible church, let it also be your endeavor by your word and example to shut to the devil and open to God the invisible house of God, namely, the hearts of the faithful, that they may keep in mind the word of God which they have heard and carry it out in deed. May the Lord in His mercy accomplish this in you.

Here the candles are laid aside.

The Bestowal of the Office. The bishop presents to each one the keys of the church. They touch them with the right hand, while the bishop says:

So act, even as about to give an account to God of the things which are kept under these keys.

The archdeacon, or the one who takes his place, now conducts the candidates to the door of the church, which they lock and unlock; then to the tower, where the bell rope is handed them, and each rings the bell with one stroke. Should thee be no tower, or should the tower be too far away or too difficult of ascent, the sacristy bell, or a small bell, placed at the church door, may be used. The candidates are then conducted back to the altar.

Prayer. The porters kneel, while the bishop, with miter on, turned to the ordained, prays:

Dearly beloved brethren, let us fervently beseech God, the Father Almighty, to + bless these His servants, whom He has deigned to elect to the office of porter; may they with utmost care attend to the house of God, by day and night and announce the hours appointed for divine services, through the help of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with Him in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.
R. Amen.

The bishop, with his miter off, turns to the altar and says:

Let Us Pray

Let us bend our knees. R. Arise.

Turning again to the candidates kneeling before him, the bishop prays:

Holy Lord, almighty Father, eternal God, bless + these Thy servants for the office of porter, that among the keepers of the Church they may be devoted to Thy service and together with Thine elect have a share in Thy reward. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. R.
Amen.

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The Order of Reader

The Lectorate -- the 2nd of the Minor Orders

**according to the Traditional
Catholic Rite of Holy Orders**



by A. Biskupek, S.V.D.
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Archbishop of Chicago

The lector is a reader. Readings from the sacred books formed part of the divine services even in the Old Testament. In the Christian Church such readings were incorporated from the very beginning into the celebration of the Eucharistic mystery. The first part of holy Mass constituted the so-called Mass of the catechumens, or instruction service, for those who prepared for baptism and were not allowed as yet to assist at the whole Mass. The instructions were based on Holy Scripture, and the reader would read the text.

It must be remembered that the ancient manuscripts were not as easy to read as a modern book. No distinction was made between small letters and capitals, words were not clearly separated, punctuation marks not used. Reading, therefore, required careful preparation in order to be done correctly, fluently, and distinctly.

It seems that in the beginning capable laymen took care of this reading, but at a very early date readers were ordained; even boys possessing the necessary knowledge were admitted to this order. As the Mass of the catechumens lost its original significance, and reading at the divine services was taken over more and more by members of the major orders, readers began to form the schola cantorum and took care of the singing, probably before the seventh century.

The rite mentions as another duty of lectors the blessing of bread and first fruits. The faithful as well as the catechumens would bring along these things to be blessed, and since the catechumens were dismissed before the beginning of the Mass of the faithful, it was convenient that the lector should perform the blessing before they left. Canon 1147 reaffirms this privilege of the lector. It is the only case where a cleric in minor orders is authorized to perform a blessing.

At the present time it is customary in seminary chapels that a

reader sings the Epistle during a simple High Mass; but the singing of the Epistle at the solemn High Mass is reserved to the subdeacon. Readers, however, sing the prophecies on Holy Saturday and the Saturday before Pentecost.

If the lectorate is conferred during Mass, this is done:

Saturday before Passion Sunday: after the Kyrie.

Holy Saturday: after the Gloria.

Saturdays of Ember weeks: after the second lesson.

On other days, if the Mass has Gloria: after the Gloria; if the Mass has no Gloria: after the Kyrie.

The Rite

The Call. The bishop, with his miter on, sits on the faldstool before the middle of the altar. The archdeacon bids the candidates come forward; the notary reads their names:

Let those come forward who are to be ordained to the office of reader: N. N., etc.

Each one answers *adsum*, goes before the altar and kneels, holding the burning candle in his right hand.

The Instruction. When all are assembled, the bishop address them as follows:

Dearly beloved sons, chosen to be readers in the house of our God, know your office and fulfill it; for God is powerful to give you in increasing measure the grace of everlasting perfection.

The reader's duty is to read what he preaches (or: to read the Scripture text for the preacher), to sing the lessons, to bless bread and all new fruits. Endeavor, therefore, to read the word of God, that is, the sacred lessons, distinctly and intelligibly, without any mistake or falsification, so that the faithful may understand and be edified, and that the truth of the divine lessons be not through your carelessness lost for the instruction of the hearers.

But what you read with your lips, you must believe in your hearts and practice in your works; so that you may be able to teach your hearers by word and example.

Therefore, when you read, stand in a high place of the church, so that you may be heard and seen by all. This your bodily position is to signify that your life ought to move on a high plane of virtue, so that you may give the example of a heavenly life to all those by whom you are heard and seen. May God by His grace accomplish this in you.

Here the candles are laid aside.

The Bestowal of the Office. The bishop now presents to the candidates the book containing the lessons, that is, a missal, breviary, or bible. The ordinands touch it with the right hand, while he says:

Receive, and be readers of the word of God. If you fulfill your office faithfully and profitably, yours will be the reward of those who have duly administered the word of God from the beginning.

Prayer. The bishop rises and prays:

Let us beseech, beloved brethren, God, the Father Almighty, graciously to bless these servants whom He deigns to assume into the order of reader. May they intelligibly read what is to be read in the Church of God, and carry it out in works. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, His Son, who lives and reigns with Him in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

The bishop, with miter off, turns to the altar and says:

Let Us Pray
Let us bend our knees. R. Amen.

Turning again to the candidates kneeling before him, the bishop prays:

Holy Lord, Father Almighty, eternal God, vouchsafe to + bless these Thy servants for the office of reader. May they by constant application to reading acquire knowledge and proficiency, read aloud what must be done and practice what they have read, so that by the example of their virtue in both respects they may give support to holy Church. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

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The Order of Exorcist

The Exorcistate -- the 3rd of the Minor Orders

according to the Traditional
Catholic Rite of Holy Orders



by A. Biskupek, S.V.D
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Archbishop of Chicago

To exorcise means to deliver a person from the presence or influence of evil spirits. That the devil, within the limits allowed by God, has retained a certain power over men even after the coming of Christ is clearly testified by Holy Scripture and the history of the Church. Jesus drove out devils from the possessed and He bestowed this power upon His apostles and disciples. In the early times of the Christian era many lay persons possessed this power as a charism.

It is in harmony with reason and faith to assume that the devil has greater power over the unbaptized in consequence of original sin. For this reason, at a very early date, exorcisms were performed repeatedly over the catechumens in preparation for baptism. To perform these exorcisms and, in general, to exorcise persons possessed by or under the influence of evil spirits exorcists were ordained.

The rite speaks of exorcists as spiritual physicians endowed with the power of healing. This may also refer to bodily afflictions caused by the devil; once the influence of the devil is broken by the exorcism, the affliction ceases.

The other duties of the exorcist stood in close relation to this principal function of the order. According to the usual interpretation of the instruction read to the ordinands, he was to direct persons under exorcism, and for that reason barred from Holy Communion, when to withdraw. Furthermore, it was his duty at sacred functions to administer the water for the washing of hands to the officiating priest. The latter ceremony symbolizes purification from sin, hence a banishing of the influence of the evil spirits; it was fitting, therefore, to assign this duty to the exorcist.

In our days all baptismal exorcisms are embodied in the solemn rite of baptism, and are performed by the priest or deacon who baptizes. To exorcise a person possessed by the devil an explicit

permission of the diocesan bishop is required, and it can be given only to a priest.

If the exorcistate is conferred during Mass, this is done:

Saturday before Passion Sunday: after the Kyrie.

Holy Saturday: after the Gloria.

Saturdays of Ember weeks: after the third lesson.

On other days, if the Mass has Gloria: after the Gloria; if the Mass has no Gloria, after the Kyrie.

The Rite

The Call. The bishop, with his miter on, sits on the faldstool before the middle of the altar. The archdeacon bids the candidates come forward; the notary reads their names:

Let those come forward who are to be ordained to the office of exorcist: N. N., etc.

Each one answers *adsum*, goes before the altar and kneels, holding the burning candle in his right hand.

The Instruction. When all are assembled, the bishop addresses them as follows:

Dearly beloved sons, as you are about to be ordained to the office of exorcist, you must understand the office which you receive. The duty of the exorcist is to cast out devils, to direct the people that he who is barred from Communion should withdraw, and to administer water at the sacred functions. You receive, therefore, the power to lay your hands upon the possessed; and by the imposition of your hands, the grace of the Holy Spirit, and the words of the exorcism, the unclean spirits shall be cast out from the bodies of the possessed.

Accordingly, as you cast out devils from others, seek to remove from your own minds and bodies all uncleanness and iniquity, lest you be overcome by those evil spirits whom, in virtue of your office, you cast out of others. Through the exercise of your office learn to rule over evil habits, lest the enemy discover in your lives anything which he might claim as his own. For then you will consistently command the evil spirits in others when you first overcome their manifold wickedness in yourselves. May the Lord through His Holy Spirit grant that you may accomplish this.

Here the candles are laid aside.

The Bestowal of the Office. The candidates now come up to the bishop, and each touches the book which he presents to them,

saying:

Receive, and commit to memory, and have the power to lay your hands upon the possessed, be they baptized or catechumens.

Prayer. The bishop rises and prays for the candidates kneeling before him:

Let us, dearly beloved brethren, humbly beseech God, the Father Almighty, that He may graciously + bless these His servants for the office of exorcist. May they be spiritual commanders, to cast out of the bodies of the possessed the evil spirits with all their manifold wickedness. Through His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with Him in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

The bishop, with his miter off, turns to the altar and says:

Let Us Pray

Let us bend our knees. R. Arise.

Turning again to the candidates kneeling before him, the bishop prays:

Holy Lord, Father Almighty, eternal God, vouchsafe to bless these Thy servants for the office of exorcist. May they have power and authority, by the imposition of their hands and the word of prayer, to restrain the unclean spirits and be the approved physicians of Thy Church, endowed with the power of healing and with heavenly strength. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

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The Order of Acolyte

The Acolytate -- the 4th and highest of the Minor Orders

according to the Traditional
Catholic Rite of Holy Orders



by A. Biskupek, S.V.D.
Mission Press, 1954
Imprimi Potest May 4, 1942 Charles Michel, S.V.D. Provincial
Imprimatur May 4, 1942 + Samuel A. Stritch, D.D.
Archbishop of Chicago

The acolytate is the highest of the minor orders. The term is derived from a Greek word which signifies to follow, to accompany. The acolyte's duty and privilege was and is to assist members of the major orders at the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice and other liturgical functions; he takes care of the light and serves the wine and water at holy Mass.

Light was always extensively used at divine services, even in the Old Testament, because of its deep significance. To the symbolic reasons was added the practical necessity, when services were held at nighttime or, as it frequently happened during the times of persecution, in the catacombs.

For a long time, acolytes performed other very important functions, at least in the Church of Rome. At the Communion of the Mass they received the sacred species in linen bags, hung around their neck, and presented them to the priest or bishop for distribution to the people. As we know from the story of St. Tarsicius, acolytes were employed to bring the Blessed Eucharist to the absent, especially the confessors of the faith detained in prison; they, likewise, carried consecrated particles from the pope's Mass to the priests, who celebrated the sacred mysteries in the parish churches of Rome; finally, they were the bearers of the blessed bread, eulogia, which bishops exchanged among themselves as a symbol of their communion in the charity of Christ.

In the course of time, however, some of these functions were discontinued, others were taken over by members of the major orders. And, because of the practical difficulty of having ordained acolytes stationed at every church, laymen, especially boys, were admitted to act as Mass servers and torchbearers, and the order of acolytes merely served as a transition to the major orders.

If the acolytate is conferred during Mass, this is done:
Saturday before Passion Sunday: after the Kyrie.

Holy Saturday: after the Gloria.

Saturdays of Ember weeks: after the fourth lesson.

On other days, if the Mass has Gloria: after the Gloria; if the Mass has no Gloria: after the Kyrie.

The Rite

The Call. The bishop, with miter on sits on the faldstool before the middle of the altar. The archdeacon bids the candidates come forward; the notary reads their names:

Let those come forward who are to be ordained to the office of acolyte: N. N., etc.

Each one answers *adsum*, goes before the altar and kneels, holding the burning candle in his right hand.

The Instruction. When all are assembled, the bishop addresses them as follows:

Dearly beloved sons, about to receive the office of acolyte, consider what it is that you receive. The duty of the acolyte is to carry the candlestick; to light the lights of the church, to minister wine and water at the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

Hence, endeavor to discharge worthily the office received. For you cannot be pleasing to God if in your hands you carry the light for God and in your works are slaves of darkness and thus give to your fellowmen the example of faithlessness.

Rather, as the Truth says: "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven." And as the apostle Paul says: "In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. Therefore, let your loins be girt and burning lamps in your hands, that you may be children of the light. Cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. For you were heretofore darkness, but now light in the Lord. Walk then as children of the light."

What is to be understood by that light on which the Apostle insists so much, he himself explains when he adds: "For the fruit of the light is in all goodness and justice and truth."

Be fervent, therefore, in all justice and goodness and truth, that you may enlighten yourselves and others and the Church of God. For then you will worthily minister wine and water at the divine Sacrifice when you have offered yourselves as a sacrifice to God by a chaste life and good works. May the

Lord in His mercy grant it to you.

Here the candles are laid aside.

The Bestowal of the Office. The bishop now presents to each candidate a candlestick with an unlighted candle. Each one touches both, the candlestick with the thumb, and the candle with the index finger of the right hand, while the bishop says:

Receive the candlestick with the candle, and know that it is your duty to light the lights of the church in the name of the Lord.

The acolyte answers: Amen.

Then an empty cruet is presented to them. They touch it, while the bishop says:

Receive the cruet, to minister wine and water for the Eucharist of the blood of Christ, in the name of the Lord.

The acolyte answers: Amen.

Prayer. The candidates kneel. The bishop rises, with miter on, and, turned toward them, prays:

Dearly beloved brethren, let us humbly beseech God, the Father Almighty, to + bless these His servants in the order of acolyte, that as they carry the material light in their hands, they may also send forth a spiritual light by their conduct, through the help of our Lord Jesus Christ, who with Him and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

The bishop, with his miter off, turns to the altar and says:

Let Us Pray

Let us bend our knees. R. Amen.

Turning again to the candidates kneeling before him, the bishop prays:

Holy Lord, Father Almighty, eternal God, Thou hast sent the light of Thy glory into this world through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, and His apostles, and hast willed that, in order to blot out the ancient debt of our death He should be fastened to the most glorious standard of the Cross and that blood and water should flow from His side, for the salvation of the human race. Vouchsafe to + bless these Thy servants for the office of acolyte, that they may faithfully serve at Thy

holy altars, attend to the lighting of Thy Church, and minister wine and water for the consecration of the blood of Christ, Thy Son, at the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Enkindle, O Lord, their minds and hearts with they love of Thy grace, so that, alight with they splendor of Thy countenance, they may faithfully serve Thee in holy Church. Through the same Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

Let Us Pray

Holy Lord, Father Almighty, eternal God, who didst speak to Moses and Aaron that lamps should be lighted in the Tabernacle of the Testimony, bless + these Thy servants, that thy may be acolytes in Thy Church. Through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

Let Us Pray

Almighty, everlasting God, Fountain of light and Source of goodness, who has enlightened the world through Jesus Christ Thy Son, the true light, and hast redeemed it through the mystery of His Passion, vouchsafe to + bless these Thy servants whom we ordain to the office of acolyte. We beseech Thee in Thy mercy to illumine their minds with the light of knowledge, and to refresh them with the dew of Thy tender love, that with Thy help they may so fulfill the office assumed as to attain an everlasting reward. Through the same Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

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The Order of Subdeacon

The Subdiaconate -- the 1st of the Major Orders

**according to the Traditional
Catholic Rite of Holy Orders**



by A. Biskupek, S.V.D.
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Imprimi Potest May 4, 1942 Charles Michel, S.V.D. Provincial
Imprimatur May 4, 1942 + Samuel A. Stritch, D.D.
Archbishop of Chicago

The subdiaconate is the order which is under, or next to, the diaconate. As with the growth of the Church the work of deacons increased, and also divine services were celebrated with greater solemnity, holy Church introduced this order and assigned to its members some of the functions that before had been taken care of by deacons. This must have been done before the middle of the third century.

Although the subdiaconate is not a sacrament, it has been counted a major order since the beginning of the thirteenth century at the latest. The reason for giving it such a high rank lies in the functions and obligations attached to the order.

The subdiaconate is the decisive step in the life of the cleric. Whereas the minorite may return to secular pursuits, if he chooses to do so, the subdeacon assumes the obligation of observing perfect chastity in the unmarried state and of reciting the Divine Office, both for life.

It is not certain when celibacy became a law for the subdeacon, but it must have been rather early, since St. Gregory mentions it about the year 600.

The recitation of the Divine Office grew out of the custom, found already in the Old Testament, of reciting prayers at stated hours, i.e., the third, sixth, and ninth hour. It was but natural that the monks from the very beginning of the monastic life should adopt this custom. In the course of time the prayers were given a more definite form, and the number of hours was increased to seven to bring them in conformity with the psalmist's words: "Seven times a day I have given praise to Thee." (Ps. 118, 164). Psalms made up the principal part of the Office. The obligation for secular clerics to recite the Divine Office publicly and in common is met first in the fifth century. For a long time the obligation was incumbent only on those clerics who held some benefice. It was only toward the end

of the twelfth century that all members of the major orders were obliged to the private recitation of the Office.

According to the present discipline of the Church the subdeacon assists at solemn liturgical functions and sings the Epistle during a solemn High Mass. He also washes the corporals, palls, and purificators, that have been used for the celebration of holy Mass. If no subdeacons are available, deacons or priests attend to these duties.

The features which appear in the ordination of subdeacons are:

1. The statement of the title under which the candidate is ordained.
2. The prostration and the Litany of the Saints.
3. The investiture with the insignia of the office.

Of these features, only the title calls for a brief explanation.

By *title*, we understand a certain guarantee or security insuring decent support to the cleric. Originally *title* designated the church to which a cleric was attached, the service of which entitled him to support. Holy Church wishes that clerics should be free from material cares, so as to be able to devote themselves wholly to priestly work. The customary titles in our days are, for secular priests: the title of benefice, of service of the diocese, of the missions; in the United States it is the title of the service of the Church. Religious priests are ordained to the title of poverty, or the title of the common table.

The subdiaconate is conferred:

Saturdays of Ember weeks: after the fifth lesson.

On all other days: immediately before the epistle.

The candidates present themselves for ordination dressed in alb, cincture, the amice loosely hanging about the neck. On their left arm they carry the tunic and maniple, and in their right hand a burning candle.

The Rite

The Call. The bishop, with his miter on, sits on the faldstool before the middle of the altar. The archdeacon bids the candidates come forward; the notary reads their names. There is added in this ordination to each name the title under which the candidate is to be ordained.

Let those who are to be ordained subdeacons come forward:
 N. N., to the title of the Church N.; N. N., to the title of his patrimony; to the title of the missions; Frt. N., of the Congregation of N., to the title of the common table.

Each one answers: *adsum*, goes before the altar and stands, holding the burning candle in his right hand.

First Instruction. When all are assembled in the sanctuary, the bishop addresses them as follows. This instruction is left out if all the ordinands are religious, since religious have already taken the decisive step for life in their religious profession. In this case the candles are laid aside and the Litany of the Saints follows immediately.

Dearly beloved sons, you are to be promoted to the sacred order of subdeaconship. Again and again you must carefully consider the office for which you ask today of your own accord. For as yet you are free; if you so decided, you may lawfully pass over to secular pursuits; but after you have received this order, you will be free no longer to withdraw from the chosen course, but bound for life to the service of God, whom to serve is to rule. And you will be under obligation, with His help, to observe chastity and to employ yourselves in the ministry of the Church at all times. Therefore, while there is time, reflect. If you decide to persevere in your holy resolve, come forward in the name of the Lord.

The ordinands advance one step. If there are also candidates for the diaconate and priesthood present, they are called now and come to the altar; if not, there follows the prostration and the Litany of the Saints.

The litany finished, all rise. The bishop, with his miter on, takes his seat on the faldstool before the middle of the altar; if candidates for deaconship or the priesthood are present, the archdeacon announces in a loud voice:

Let those who are to be ordained deacons and priests return to their place.

If there are no such ordinands, the bishop proceeds immediately to the ordination of the subdeacons.

Second Instruction. As the ordinands kneel before him, the bishop addresses them as follows:

Dearly beloved sons, who are to be ordained subdeacons, carefully consider what office is entrusted to you. The duty of the subdeacon is to prepare the water for the ministry of the altar, to assist the deacon, to wash the altar cloths and corporals, to hand to the deacon the chalice and paten used at the sacrifice.

The offerings which are brought to the altar are called the Loaves of Proposition. Of these offerings so much must be placed on the altar as will suffice for the people. There should be nothing in the tabernacle to decay.

The cloths which are used for the covering of the altar must be washed in one vessel; the corporals in another one. Where the corporals have been washed, no other linen is to be washed, and the water must be poured into the baptistry.

Endeavor, therefore, to perform these material services properly and with careful attention, and in a like manner to fulfill the spiritual obligations symbolized by them.

The altar of holy Church is Christ, as John testifies, who says in his Apocalypse that he saw Him as a golden altar standing before the throne. In Him and through Him the gifts of the faithful are offered to God the Father. The palls and corporals of this altar are the members of Christ, namely, God's faithful; with these the Lord is clothed, as it were, with precious vestments as the psalmist says: "The Lord is king, He is clothed with beauty." Blessed John also saw in the Apocalypse the Son of Man girded with a golden cincture, that is, surrounded by the multitude of saints.

If, therefore, it should happen through human frailty that the faithful are defiled by some sin, you must minister to them the water of heavenly doctrine, so that, cleansed by it, they may again be an ornament of the altar and take part in the celebration of the divine Sacrifice.

Hence, be such as to worthily assist at the divine Sacrifice, and to serve the Church of God, which is the body of Christ. Be grounded in the true and Catholic faith; for, as the Apostle says; All that is not of faith is sin, and schism, and outside the unity of the Church.

And so, if hitherto you have been tardy as to the church, henceforth you must be prompt. If hitherto you have been prone to indulge in sleep, henceforth you must be vigilant. If hitherto you have been given to drink, henceforth you must be temperate. If hitherto you have been wanting in honor, henceforth you must be without reproach. May He deign to grant it to you, who lives and reigns, God, forever and ever.
R. Amen.

The Bestowal of the Office. The bishop now presents to the ordinands and empty chalice with a paten. Each one touches both in such a way as to put the thumb against the cup of the chalice and the index finger upon the paten. At the same time the bishop says:

Behold what ministry is entrusted to you. Therefore, I exhort you so to conduct yourselves as to be pleasing to God.

The archdeacon presents to each candidate cruets filled with wine and water, also a basin and a towel; all of which the candidates touch in like manner.

Prayer for the Ordained. Then the bishop, with miter on, rises and, facing the people, prays:

Let us, dearly beloved brethren, beseech our God and Lord to pour out His + blessing and grace upon these His servants, whom He has deigned to call to the office of subdeaconship. May they be faithful ministers in His sight and attain the reward laid up for the saints, by the help of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with Him in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

The bishop, with miter off, turns to the altar and says:

Let Us Pray

The assistants: Let us bend our knees. R. Arise.

Again the bishop turns to the ordained kneeling before him and prays:

Holy Lord, Father Almighty, eternal God, vouchsafe to + bless these Thy servants, whom Thou hast deigned to call to the office of subdeaconship. Make them in Thy holy temple valiant and watchful sentinels of the heavenly army, faithful ministers, of Thy holy altars. May the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and fortitude, the Spirit of knowledge and piety, rest upon them; fill them with the Spirit of Thy fear. Strengthen them in the divine ministry, so that, obedient to law and submissive to direction, they may obtain Thy grace. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

Investiture with the Insignia of the Office. The bishop sits, with his miter on, and invests the candidates with the amice which they wear around the neck, pulling it over their heads and saying:

Receive the amice, by which is signified moderation of speech. In the name of the + Father and of the + Son, and of the Holy + Ghost.

The subdeacon answers: Amen.

Then the bishop puts the maniple on the left arm of each candidate, saying:

Receive the maniple, by which are signified the fruits of good works. In the name of the + Father and of the + Son, and of the Holy + Ghost.

The subdeacon answers: Amen.

Then the bishop invests them with the tunic, the official garb of a subdeacon, saying:

May the Lord clothe thee with the tunic of gladness and the garment of joy. In the name of the + Father and of the + Son, and of the Holy + Ghost.

The subdeacon answers: Amen.

Finally, the bishop presents to the candidates the book of epistles, which they touch with the right hand, the bishop saying at the same time:

Receive the book of epistles and have the power to read them in the holy Church of God, for the living as well as for the dead. In the name of the + Father and of the + Son, and of the Holy + Ghost.

The subdeacon answers: Amen.

The archdeacon now directs the ordained to return to their places. The bishop continues the Mass, and while he reads the Epistle, one of the newly ordained subdeacons reads it aloud with him.

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The Order of Deacon

The Diaconate -- the 2nd of the Major Orders

**according to the Traditional
Catholic Rite of Holy Orders**



by A. Biskupek, S.V.D.
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Archbishop of Chicago

The diaconate is the lowest order of the divinely established hierarchy, as well as the lowest sacramental order. It is a true sacrament and imprints an indelible mark upon the soul of the recipient. The deacon partakes of the priesthood so far as he is the assistant of the priest and bishop. The election and ordination of the first deacons is related in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 6, 1-6). In the Old Testament the order of deacons was typified by the Levites.

Deacons have always held an important place in the Church. Their duties in ancient times were manifold: to assist the priest at the Holy Sacrifice, to distribute Holy Communion, to read the Gospel, to preach and to instruct the people. They also exercised a certain supervision over the faithful, and together with priests assisted the bishop in the ecclesiastical courts; lastly, they had charge of the poor and sick, and administered the revenues of the Church. At the present time the functions of the deacon are mainly to assist the priest at solemn liturgical functions. It is only in rare cases that deacons baptize, preach, or distribute Holy Communion.

New ceremonial acts which appear in the ordination of deacons are:

1. **The Postulation** -- The archdeacon requests the bishop, in the name of the Church to perform the ordination. The postulation is the public expression of the anxious desire of the Church that worthy ministers of the altar be ordained, so that the public worship of God may be continued and the mission of Christ for the salvation of souls carried on.
2. **The Scrutiny** -- The bishop makes inquiry as to the worthiness of the candidates. Many laws have been passed, and many are still in force, whereby the responsibility authorities are required to watch over the candidates for the priesthood and to recommend for ordination only such men as, according to their opinion, will be worthy priests.

3. **The Consultation of the People --** The assembled people are called upon to state openly if they know aught concerning a candidate which would make him undesirable for the service of the Church. This, as well as the preceding act, was of eminently practical value in ancient times, when candidates for the priesthood did not receive a seminary training of many years as in our days. The ceremony clearly shows the importance which holy Church attaches to the selection of worthy candidates for the service of the altar. Indeed, the bishop cannot in conscience ordain anyone concerning whose worthiness he does not have a positive assurance.
4. **The Imposition of the Hands --** This is the essential rite by which the orders of sacramental character are conferred; it symbolizes the communication of supernatural grace and power through the Holy Spirit.

The diaconate is always conferred after the Epistle.

Candidates for deaconship present themselves for ordination dressed in alb, cincture, amice, maniple; on their left arm they carry stole and dalmatic, and in their right hand a burning candle.

The Rite

The Call. The bishop, with his miter on, sits on the faldstool before the middle of the altar. The archdeacon bids the candidates come forward; the notary reads their names:

Let those come forward who are to be ordained deacons: N.
N., etc.

Each one answers *adsum*, goes before the altar and kneels, holding the burning candle in his right hand.

The Postulation. The archdeacon continues:

Most Reverend Father,

If the ordaining bishop is a cardinal, the archdeacon says:

Most Eminent and Reverend Father,

our holy mother, the Catholic Church, requests that you ordain the subdeacons here present to the office of deaconship.

The Scrutiny. The bishop inquires:

Does thou know them to be worthy?

The archdeacons answers:

As far as human frailty allows to know, I know and I testify that they are worthy of the charge of this office.

The bishop says:

Thanks be to God.

Consultation of the People. The bishop, with his miter on, now makes to clergy and people the following announcement:

By the help of the Lord God and our Savior Jesus Christ, we choose the subdeacons here present for the order of deaconship. If anyone has anything against them, let him confidently come forward and speak in the presence of God and for the sake of God. However, let him be mindful of his condition.

The Instruction. After a short pause the bishop addresses to the ordinands the following instruction:

Dearly beloved sons, about to be promoted to the order of Levites, consider well to what an exalted rank you rise in the Church. The office of the deacon is to assist at the altar, to baptize, and to preach.

Under the Old Law, indeed, the one tribe of Levi was chosen out of the twelve tribes, that it should attend with special devotion to the Tabernacle of God and to its sacrifices according to a perpetual rite. So great was the dignity bestowed upon it that no one, except of this tribe, could rise to hold an office in the performance of that divine worship. Thus by some great hereditary privilege it deserved not to be and to be called the tribe of the Lord.

Today, dearly beloved sons, you receive their name and their office. You are chosen for the service of the Tabernacle of the Testimony, that is, the Church of God, in the Levitical office. The Church, always ready for battle, wages an unceasing warfare against her enemies, as the Apostle says: "Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places." It is your duty to uphold and defend this Church of God, even as the Tabernacle, with the armor of holiness, by divine preaching and perfect example.

Levi signifies added, or lifted up. You, dearly beloved sons, who receive your name from an office of paternal inheritance, be lifted up above the desires of the flesh and earthly passions which war against the soul. Be clean and undefiled, pure and chaste, as it behooves ministers of Christ and dispensers of the mysteries of God, that you may worthily be added to the number of those who have ecclesiastical rank and deserve to be the inheritance and the beloved tribe of the Lord. And since you are co-ministers and cooperate in the sacrifice of the body and blood of the Lord, keep yourselves proof against every allurements of the flesh, as the Scripture says: "Be ye clean, you that carry the vessels of the Lord." Remember that Blessed Stephen was elected by the apostles for this office, because of his eminent chastity. Take care to interpret the gospel by living works to those to whom you are preaching so that it may be said of you: "Blessed are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things." Have your feet shod with the examples of the saints in the propagation of the gospel of peace. May the Lord grant it to you by His grace. R. Amen.

Prayer. If no subdeacons have been ordained, the prostration takes place here and the Litany of the Saints is said.

After the litany, the ordinands kneel, and the bishop, sitting on the faldstool, with his miter on, addresses clergy and people as follows:

Let common supplication and united prayer continue, that these men, who are prepared for the ministry of deaconship, may, through the prayer of the whole Church, shine in the order of Levitical + benediction, distinguish themselves by a spiritual life and show forth the grace by which they have been sanctified, through the help of our Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, God forever. R. Amen.

The bishop rises, with the miter on and, facing the ordinands, says with a loud voice:

Dearly beloved brethren, let us beseech God, the Father Almighty, that He may graciously pour out His grace upon and bless these His servants whom He deigns to assume into the office of deaconship, and in His goodness preserve in them the gifts of the ordination to which they are admitted. May He graciously hear our prayers and by His loving assistance bring to perfection what we are about to administer, and may He by His + blessing sanctify and strengthen them, whom according to our knowledge we consider worthy to be assigned to the celebration of the

sacred mysteries. Through His only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who with Him and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, God,

The bishop, without miter and with arms extended, continues:

Forever and ever.

R. Amen.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And also with thee.

V. Lift up your hearts.

R. We have lifted them up unto the Lord.

V. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

R. It is meet and just.

It is truly meet and just, right and profitable unto salvation, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to Thee, O holy Lord, Father Almighty, eternal God, who givest honors, assignest rank, and bestowest offices. Abiding in Thyself, Thou renewest all things and disposest all things through Thy Word and Power and Wisdom, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. With eternal providence dost Thou prepare and dispense in due time what is needful. Thou hast adorned with a variety of heavenly gifts Thy Church, which is His body. Its members are distinct, but Thou hast united them by a wonderful law which governs its whole structure. Thus Thou makest it to grow and to expand, and Thy temple to enlarge.

Thou hast ordained that those who are in charge of the sacred ministry should serve Thy holy name in three orders. So of old, the sons of Levi were chosen as faithful guardians to devote their lives to the sacred mysteries celebrated in Thy house and to possess as their abiding portion the heritage of a blessing which was to endure forever.

Look down graciously, O Lord, also on these Thy servants whom we, amid humble prayer, ordain to the office of deacon, that they may serve Thy holy altars. As men without the resources of divine perception and supreme understanding, we judge of their lives so far as we are able. But what is unknown to us, does not escape Thee, O Lord; and what is hidden does not deceive Thee. Thou knowest the secrets; Thou searchest the hearts. Thou art able to examine their lives with heavenly discernment, by which Thou always prevailest, both to cleanse from sin and to grant what is to be accomplished.

The Bestowal of the Office. Here the Ordinands rise, go up to the altar and kneel before the bishop, who lays his right hand on each one and says:

Receive the Holy Spirit, unto power and to resist the devil and his temptations. In the name of the Lord.

Each one returns to his place and kneels. Then the bishop, holding his right hand extended over all, continues:

Send forth upon them, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the Holy Spirit that they may be strengthened by Him, through the gift of Thy sevenfold grace, unto the faithful discharge of Thy service. May the pattern of all virtue abound in them, modest authority, constant propriety, the purity of innocence, the observance of spiritual discipline. Let Thy precepts shine forth in their lives so that, by the example of their holiness, the faithful may be aroused to holy imitation. May they prize above all things the testimony of a good conscience, persevere firm and steadfast in Christ, and by Thy grace make themselves worthy to rise in due succession from a lower to a higher order.

Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, Thy Son, who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

Investiture with the Insignia of the Office. Here the bishop seats himself and receives the miter; the ordained approach and kneel before him, each holding in his hand a stole which the bishop takes and imposes upon the left shoulder, saying:

Receive the spotless + stole from the hand of God, fulfill thy ministry; for God is powerful to increase His grace unto thee, who lives and reigns forever and ever.

The deacon answers: Amen.

The bishop takes the dalmatic from each one and invests him with it, saying:

May the Lord clothe thee with the garment of salvation and the vesture of gladness, and may the dalmatic of justice ever encompass thee. In the name of the Lord.

The deacon answers: Amen.

At last the bishop presents to them the book of gospels; all touch it with the right hand, while the bishop says:

Receive the power to read the Gospel in the Church of God, both for the living and for the dead. In the name of the Lord.

The deacon answers: Amen.

Prayer. The bishop, miter off, turns to the altar and says:

Let Us Pray

The assistants: Let us bend our knees. R. Arise.

Turning again to the ordained, the bishop continues:

Hear, O Lord, our prayers, and send forth upon these Thy servants the Spirit of Thy + blessing, so that enriched with the heavenly gift they may be able to earn the favor of Thy Majesty and give to others the example of a virtuous life. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

Let Us Pray

Holy Lord, Father of faith, hope and grace, Rewarder of progress: everywhere in heaven and on earth dost Thou employ the services of angels and scatter the works fo Thy will throughout the universe: vouchsafe to enlighten also these Thy servants by love of spiritual things so that, ready for Thy service, they may as irreproachable ministers join Thy holy altars. May they grow in purity through Thy grace, and be worthy of the rank of those seven men whom the apostles elected under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and of whom Stephen was the chief and the leader. Adorned with all virtues which Thy service calls for, may they be pleasing to Thee. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

Upon the direction of the archdeacon, the ordained return to their places. One of the newly ordained deacons reads the Gospel aloud, together with the bishop.

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The Priesthood

The 3rd and highest of the Major Orders

according to the Traditional
 Catholic Rite of Holy Orders



by A. Biskupek, S.V.D
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This is the great sacrament by which the deacon becomes a priest of the New Testament, another Christ. The word priest is derived from the Greek word *presbyteros*, which means elder; the term "*elder*" designates a person holding an office which usually is conferred only on such as are distinguished by age, experience, nobility of character and life. The priest is distinguished from the rest of the people by the dignity and authority inherent in the very nature of the priesthood.

Priests were typified in the Old Testament by the seventy elders, who were chosen by Moses in the desert to assist him in the government of the people. At what time the first priests were ordained in the church of the New Testament cannot be established with certainty. However, it is probable that when St. Paul wrote to Timothy: "Lay not thy hands lightly on any man." (1 Tim. 5, 22), he had in mind the ordination of priests.

Of the awe-inspiring powers vested in the priesthood three are conferred by a special ceremonial act, i.e.: the power to offer up the Holy Sacrifice, the power to forgive sins, and the power to bless. The indelible character of the priesthood is impressed upon the priest's soul: and for all eternity he shall be "priest according to the order of Melchisedech" (Ps. 109, 4).

The rite of the ordination of priests is truly sublime. Of the many new ceremonial acts which appear in the rite, the following call for brief explanation.

1. **The Anointing of the Hands of the Priest** - Holy oil was used extensively in the liturgical functions of the Old Testament. The high priest and the priests, the Tabernacle and its furniture, prophets and kings, were anointed. Christ Himself is announced as the *Messias*, which means the *Anointed*. He is the supreme prophet, king, and priest. It is fitting, therefore, that the priest of the Christian

Dispensation, the "other Christ," should also be anointed. The anointing symbolizes the dedication of a person to the service of God, and the bestowal of grace.

2. **The Concelebration** - Concelebration denotes the celebration of the same Mass by more than one priest. From the Offertory on, the newly ordained priests say the Mass together with the bishop, so that their ordination Mass is really their first Mass. According to the present discipline of the Latin Church, concelebration takes place only on the occasion of ordination; but it was common in ancient times and is so to the present day in the Eastern churches. Concelebration beautifully expresses the truth that there is but one priesthood and one sacrifice.
3. **The Profession of Faith** -- Toward the end of the Mass, all newly ordained priests recite together the Apostles' Creed. It is fitting that, as they enter upon their mission of teaching, they should solemnly profess the faith which they will announce to the world.
4. **The Promise of Obedience** - This promise of obedience is not a vow like the vow of obedience made by religious, but it imposes upon the priest the solemn obligation to administer his office in faithful obedience to his ecclesiastical superiors. Without obedience the Church could not carry on her work. And after all, how fitting it is that the priest, who is "another Christ," should distinguish himself and merit the blessing of God for his work by the practice of that virtue which may be called the characteristic virtue of our Savior Jesus Christ, who "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philipp. 2,8).

The priesthood is conferred before the last verse of the Tract or paschal Alleluia, before the Alleluia of the Gradual, before the last stanza of the Sequence, as the case may be.

Deacons present themselves for ordination to the priesthood dressed in amice, alb, cincture, maniple, and stole. On their left arm they carry a folded chasuble and in their right hand a burning candle.

The Rite

The Call. The bishop, with his miter on, sits on the faldstool before the middle of the altar. The archdeacon bids the candidates come forward; the notary reads their names:

Let those who are to be ordained to the order of the priesthood come forward: N.N., etc.

Each one answers: *adsum*, goes before the altar and kneels, holding the burning candle in his right hand.

The Postulation. The archdeacon presents the candidates to the bishop, requesting him to ordain them:

Most Reverend Father,

If the ordaining bishop is a cardinal, the archdeacon says:

Most Eminent and Reverend Father,

Our holy Mother, the Catholic Church, requests that you ordain the deacons here present to the office of the priesthood.

The Scrutiny. The bishop inquires:

Doest thou know them to be worthy?

The archdeacon answers:

As far as human frailty allows to know, I know and I testify that they are worthy of the charge of this office.

The bishop says:

Thanks be to God.

Consultation of the People. The bishop, with his miter on, makes to the clergy and people the following announcement:

Dearly beloved brethren, the captain of a ship as well as the passengers are in the same condition as to safety or danger. Their cause is common, therefore they ought to be of the same mind. Indeed, not without reason did the Fathers ordain that in the election of those who were to be employed in the service of the altar the people also should be consulted. For it happens here and there that, as to the life and conduct of a candidate, a few know what is unknown to the majority. Necessarily, also, people will render obedience more readily to the ordained if they have consented to his ordination."

Now, with the help of the Lord, these deacons are to be ordained priests. As far as I can judge, their life has been of approved goodness and pleasing to God, and, in my opinion, merits for them promotion to a higher ecclesiastical honor. However, lest one or a few be mistaken in their judgment, or deceived by affection, we must hear the opinion of many. Therefore, whatsoever you know about their lives or

character, whatsoever you think of their worthiness, freely make it known. Testify as to their fitness for the priesthood according to merit rather than according to affection. If anyone has anything against them, before God and for the sake of God let him confidently come forward and speak. However, let him be mindful of his condition.

The Instruction. The bishop makes a short pause; then he addresses to the ordinands the following instruction:

Dearly beloved sons, you are about to be ordained to the order of the priesthood. Strive to receive it worthily, and having received it, to discharge its duties in a praiseworthy manner.

The office of the priest is to offer sacrifice, to bless, to govern, to preach, and to baptize. Truly, it must be with great fear that you ascend to so high a station; and care must be taken that heavenly wisdom, an irreproachable character, and long-continued righteousness shall commend the candidates chosen for it.

It is for this reason that the Lord, when commanding Moses to select from the whole people of Israel seventy men to assist him, and to impart to them a share in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, added this direction: Take whom thou knowest to be elders among the people. Now you have been typified by the seventy men who were elders, if, observing the Ten Commandments of the Law by the help of the seven-fold Spirit, you will be men of virtue, mature in knowledge as well as in work.

Under the same mystery and figure, the Lord chose in the New Testament seventy-two disciples and sent them two by two, to go before Him, preaching. Thus He wished to teach by word and deed that the ministers of His Church should be perfect in faith and practice, in other words, that they should be grounded in the twin virtue of charity, namely, the love of God and the love of neighbor.

Therefore, endeavor to be such that, by the grace of God, you may be worthy to be chosen as helpers of Moses and the twelve apostles, that is, the Catholic bishops who are signified by Moses and the twelve apostles. Truly wonderful is the variety with which holy Church is endowed, adorned, and governed. Its ministers are men ordained to various orders, some bishops, others inferior in rank, priests and deacons and subdeacons; and out of many members distinguished as to dignity, the one body of Christ is formed.

And so, dearly beloved sons, chosen by the judgment of our

brethren to be our helpers in the ministry, maintain in your department inviolate purity and holiness of life. Understand what you do, imitate what you administer. Inasmuch as you celebrate the mystery of the death of the Lord, you should endeavor to mortify in your members all sin and concupiscence. Let your teaching be a spiritual medicine for the people of God and the odor of your lives a delight for the Church of Christ. May you thus build up, by preaching and example, the house, that is, the family of God, so that your promotion may not be a cause of damnation for me, nor the reception of so great an office for you, but rather of reward. May He by His grace grant it to us. R. Amen.

The Prostration and the Litany of the Saints. If no subdeacons or deacons have been ordained, there follows now the touching ceremony of the prostration. The ordinands prostrate themselves on the floor of the sanctuary, as a sign of their unworthiness and need of divine assistance. The bishop, with his miter on, kneels at the faldstool; all others who assist kneel in their places. The chanters begin the Litany of the Saints; the choir answers. If there is no choir, the bishop recites the litany, and all assisting clerics answer. The whole Church Triumphant is called upon to intercede with God that He may give worthy ministers to the Church Militant.

The Litany of the Saints is prayed here.

After the litany the ordinands rise.

The Bestowal of the Office. The most solemn moment of the rite of ordination has now arrived, the moment in which that wonderful transformation takes place in the soul of the ordinand, which makes him "Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech." **The bishop imposes both his hands upon each ordinand** without saying any prayer, and after him all priests present do the same; then the bishop and all priests raise their right hands and hold them extended over the candidates. All is hushed in silence - it is as if the heavens opened and the Holy Spirit come down in visible form to take possession of His elect: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me" (Is. 61, 1).

Holding his right hand extended, the bishop prays:

Let us pray, dearly beloved brethren, to God, the Father Almighty, that He may multiply heavenly gifts upon these His servants whom He has chosen for the office of the priesthood. May they by His help accomplish what they undertake at His gracious call. Through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

Prayer. The bishop, with his miter off, turns to the altar and

says:

Let Us Pray

The assistants: Let us bend our knees. R. Amen.

Again the bishop turns to the ordained and prays:

Hear us, we beseech Thee, Lord our God, and pour out upon these Thy servants the + blessing of the Holy Spirit and the power of priestly grace. Sustain them forever with the bounty of Thy gifts, whom we present to Thy mercy to be consecrated. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy son, who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God,

The following is said by the bishop, with his arms extended:

V. Forever and ever.

R. Amen.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And also with thee.

V. Lift up your hearts.

R. We have lifted them up unto the Lord.

V. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

R. It is meet and just.

It is truly meet and just, right and profitable unto salvation to give thanks at all times and in all places to Thee, holy Lord, Father Almighty, eternal God, Giver of honors and Dispenser of all dignities. Through Thee all things progress; by Thee they are sustained; through Thee the endowments of our rational nature are continually raised to a higher perfection according to a wisely appointed plan.

Thus have come into existence priestly orders and the office of Levites, instituted amid sacred mysteries. When Thou didst appoint high priests to govern the people, Thou didst also choose men of lower rank and inferior dignity to be at their side and to assist them in their work. Thus didst Thou multiply in the desert the spirit of Moses through the minds of seventy judicious men, so that with their help he easily governed the countless multitudes of the people. In like manner Thou hast bestowed upon Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron, the fullness of their father's priestly power, so that there might be a sufficient number of priests for the offering of salutary sacrifices and the performance of the numerous sacred rites. By the same providence Thou, O Lord, has joined to the apostles of Thy Son teachers of the faith; and with their help they have filled the whole world with the glad tidings of the gospel.

Therefore, we beseech Thee, O Lord, give also to us such

help in our infirmity; we need it so much more than they, as our weakness is so much greater. **We beseech Thee, almighty Father, invest these Thy servants with the dignity of the priesthood. Do Thou renew in their hearts the spirit of holiness, that they may hold the office, next to ours in importance, which they have received from Thee, O Lord, and by the example of their lives point out a norm of conduct.** May they be prudent fellow laborers of our order; may the pattern of all justice shine forth in them so that, when they will give a good account of the stewardship entrusted to them, they may receive the reward of eternal bliss.

What follows is said in a low voice but loud enough to be heard by those standing about.

Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

Investiture with the Priestly Vestments. The bishop sits, with his miter on. The ordained are now vested with the priestly vestments. The bishop arranges to stole of each one, which up to now was worn over the left shoulder, in the manner in which it is worn by the priest at Mass, i.e., in the form of a cross. In doing this he says:

Receive the yoke of the Lord; for His yoke is sweet and His burden light.

Then the bishop vests the candidates with the chasuble in such a manner that only the front part hangs down and the back part remains folded, saying at the same time:

Receive the priestly vestment, by which charity is signified; for God is powerful to increase unto thee charity and perfection of work.

The ordained answers:

Thanks be to God.

Prayer. While all are kneeling, the bishop, with his miter off, prays:

O God, Author of all holiness, from whom comes true consecration and the fullness of benediction, do Thou, O Lord, pour out Thy gracious blessing upon these Thy servants, upon whom we confer the honor of the priesthood. May they, by gravity of demeanor and strictness of life,

prove themselves to be elders, trained according to the principles which Paul set forth to Titus and Timothy. May they keep Thy law before their minds day and night, believe what they read, teach what they believe, and practice what they teach. May they show forth in their persons justice, constancy, mercy, fortitude, and all other virtues, be leaders by their example, inspire strength by exhortation, and preserve the gift of their ministry pure and undefiled; may they change by a holy benediction bread and wine into the body and blood of Thy Son for the worship of Thy people. And having kept their conscience pure and true their faith in never failing charity, may they rise on the day of God's just and final judgment, full of the Holy Spirit, to perfect manhood, in the full measure of the age of Christ. Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

The bishop, with his miter off, turns to the altar, kneels and intones the following hymn, which is then continued by the choir.

Veni Creator Spiritus (Come, Holy Ghost, Creator, come...)

The Anointing of the Hands. After the first stanza the bishop seats himself and receives the miter. He takes off his gloves, and a cloth or towel is spread over his lap. The candidates approach, and kneeling before him, one by one, they hold their hands for the anointing in such a manner that the palms are turned upward and the sides and the little fingers touch each other. The bishop dips his thumb into the holy oil, draws a line from the thumb of the right hand to the index finger of the left and from the thumb of the left hand to the index finger of the right, and then anoints the whole of both palms. While doing this he pronounces the following prayer:

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to consecrate and sanctify these hands by this unction and our + blessing.

The anointed answers: Amen.

That whatsoever they shall bless may be blessed, and whatsoever they shall consecrate be consecrated and sanctified, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The anointed answers: Amen.

Then, keeping his hands joined, he goes to the side of the altar, where one of the assisting priests binds them together with a white cloth, leaving the fingers free. When all have been anointed, the bishop purifies his thumb with crumbs of bread.

Bestowal of the Power to Offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. By the preceding rite of the imposition of hands the

candidates have been made priests and possess all priestly powers. But the power to celebrate Mass, to change bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ is such a tremendous, awe-inspiring power that a special rite is employed to express its bestowal and to bring more fully into realization what has been received.

The ordained again approach the bishop and kneel before him. A chalice containing wine and water, and the paten with a host lying on it, is presented to each; whereupon the ordained takes the paten between the index and the middle finger, touching with the index finger the paten and host and with the middle finger the cup of the chalice, while the bishop says:

Receive the power to offer sacrifice to God and to celebrate Mass for the living as well as for the dead. In the name of the Lord.

The ordained answers: Amen.

The bishop washes his hands and continues the Mass. After the Offertory the bishop puts on the miter and takes his seat before the middle of the altar. All the ordained now approach in due order, two by two, and, kneeling, offer to the bishop a burning candle, at the same time kissing the bishop's ring. If the number of the ordained is very great, only one of each order offers a candle.

Having received this offering, the bishop washes his hands, and the Mass is continued. From now on all the newly ordained priests say the Mass together with the bishop, and all prayers, even those usually said in a low voice, are said aloud.

The Mass here continues with the Offertory.

The Communion of the Ordained. After the bishop has consumed the sacred species, the newly ordained priests receive Holy Communion at his hands, but under one species only. However, since the young priests were also celebrants of the ordination Mass, the customary prayers, Confiteor, Misereatur, etc., are not said; neither does the bishop say any prayer when distributing Holy Communion. But each one, before receiving the sacred host, kisses the ring of the bishop.

Now the others who have been ordained approach the altar. Confiteor, Misereatur, etc., are said in the usual way but when giving Holy Communion the bishop uses the formula:

May the body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thee unto life everlasting.

Each one answers: Amen, kisses the ring of the bishop and receives the sacred host.

After receiving Communion -- The newly ordained priests have finished their first holy Mass. They are other Christs and in a very

special manner the friends of Jesus. Now the mission of Jesus is theirs in the fullest sense of the word. As they will daily offer the Holy Sacrifice, so their endeavor must be to apply to the world the merits of the death of the Savior. This is done especially by announcing to the world the true faith and by forgiving sins. But that in the exercise of these offices they may truly advance the glory of God, they must act in obedience to their lawful superiors. These are the thoughts expressed in the following ceremonies.

After the bishop has taken the ablution, he washes his hands; with miter off and, standing on the epistle side, he intones the following responsories, which are then continued by the choir. If there is no choir present, the bishop reads these responsories.

I will not now call you servants but my friends; for you have known all things whatsoever I have wrought in the midst of you. Alleluia.

Receive in you the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete; He it is whom the Father will send you. Alleluia.

You are my friends if you do the things that I command you. Receive in you the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. He it is whom the Father will send you. Alleluia.

The alleluia is omitted from Septuagesima to Easter.

The Profession of Faith. Having said this responsory, the bishop, with his miter on, goes to the middle of the altar and turns to the newly ordained priests. These, standing before the altar, now recite the Apostle's Creed, thus publicly professing the faith which they will preach to the world.

Bestowal of the Power to Forgive Sins. It must be remembered that the ordained were made priests and received all priestly powers by the imposition of the hands of the bishop. However, because of the excellence of the power to forgive sins, a special ceremony is employed to express its bestowal upon the priest. It is particularly fitting that this should be done after the offering of that Holy Sacrifice by which Christ has made atonement for the sins of men and reconciled us with His heavenly Father.

The bishop, with his miter on, seats himself. The newly ordained come up and kneel before him; he lays his hands on each one and says:

Receive the Holy Ghost; whose sins thou shalt forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins thou shalt retain, they are retained.

The Unfolding of the Chasuble. Then the bishop unfolds the back part of the chasuble, saying:

May the Lord clothe thee with the robe of innocence.

The Promise of Obedience. Now the bishop takes both hands of the ordained into his own and asks for the promise of obedience. If he is the Ordinary of the ordained, he says:

Dost thou promise me and my successors reverence and obedience?

If the bishop is not the Ordinary of the ordained, he says:

To secular priests: Dost thou promise to the Bishop, thy Ordinary ...?

To religious priests: Dost thou promise to the Bishop (or Prelate) who will be thy Ordinary for the time being, reverence and obedience?

The priest answers: I promise.

Then the bishop, still holding the newly ordained priest's hands within his own, kisses him on the right cheek, saying:

The peace of the Lord be always with thee.

The priest answers: Amen.

Instruction. The bishop, having received the crozier, now addresses to the newly ordained priests the following exhortation:

Dearly beloved sons, since the office which you will perform is beset with considerable danger, I admonish you to learn carefully from other experienced priests the order of the whole Mass, the consecration and the breaking of the host, and the communion, before you begin to celebrate Mass.

The Solemn Blessing. The bishop rises and blesses the priests kneeling before him:

May the blessing of the almighty God, the + Father, the + Son, and the Holy + Ghost, descend upon you, that you may be blessed in the priestly order, and offer up the sacrifice of propitiation for the sins and offenses of the people to almighty God, to whom be honor and glory forever and ever.
R. Amen.

The bishop lays aside miter and crozier and continues the Mass prayers (the Communion verse and Post Communion verse) together with the newly ordained.

The Final Admonition. (After the Last Blessing) With miter on and crozier in hand, the bishop seats himself and addresses all the ordained kneeling before him. If all orders have been conferred, the following admonition is read as it stands; if not, reference to the orders not received is left out.

Dearly beloved sons, carefully consider the order which you have received today and the burden which has been laid upon your shoulders. Endeavor to live holy lives devoted to religion and to be pleasing to the almighty God, that you may obtain His grace. May He in His mercy deign to bestow it upon you.

All those who have been promoted to the first tonsure, or the four minor orders, say once the seven penitential psalms with the litany, versicles, and orations.

Subdeacons and deacons, say the nocturn of this day.

Those who have been ordained priests, say, after your first Mass, three other Masses: one of the Holy Spirit, another of the Blessed Mary, ever virgin, and the third one for the faithful departed, and pray to almighty God also for me.

The ordained answer: Gladly.

The Last Gospel. The bishop having put aside crozier and miter goes to the gospel side of the altar and, together with the newly ordained priests, begins the Last Gospel.

Indulgences. On the day of a first Mass:

A plenary indulgence may be gained:

1. by the newly ordained priest under the usual conditions.
2. by the relatives of the priest within the third degree of consanguinity if they assist at the first Mass, receive the sacraments and pray for the intention of the Holy Father; one Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be is sufficient.

A partial indulgence of seven years may be gained by all the faithful who assist at the first Mass and pray for the intention of the Holy Father. (Raccolta, 629 and 684).



Litany of the Saints

*Note: the **Red-Bold** text are the responses which continue until the next change.*

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of heaven, **have mercy on us.**

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

God the Holy Ghost,

Holy Trinity, one God,

Holy Mary, **pray for us.**

Holy Mother of God,

Holy Virgin of virgins,

St. Michael,

St. Gabriel,

St. Raphael,

All ye holy Angels and Archangels,

All ye holy orders of blessed Spirits,

St. John the Baptist,

St. Joseph,

All ye holy Patriarchs and Prophets,

St. Peter,

St. Paul,

St. Andrew,

St. James,

St. John,

St. Thomas,

St. James,

St. Philip,

St. Bartholomew,

St. Matthew,

St. Simon,

St. Thaddeus,

St. Matthias,

St. Barnabas,

St. Luke,

St. Mark,

All ye holy Apostles and Evangelists,

All ye holy Disciples of the Lord,

All ye holy Innocents,

St. Stephen,

St. Lawrence,

St. Vincent,

SS. Fabian and Sebastian,

SS. John and Paul,

SS. Cosmas and Damian,
SS. Gervase and Protase,
All ye holy Martyrs,
St. Sylvester,
St. Gregory,
St. Ambrose,
St. Augustine,
St. Jerome,
St. Martin,
St. Nicholas,
All ye holy Bishops and Confessors,
All ye holy Doctors,
St. Anthony,
St. Benedict,
St. Bernard,
St. Dominic,
St. Francis,
All ye holy Priests and Levites,
All ye holy Monks and Hermits,
St. Mary Magdalen,
St. Agatha,
St. Lucy,
St. Agnes,
St. Cecilia,
St. Catherine,
St. Anastasia,
All ye holy Virgins and Widows,
All ye holy Saints of God, **Make intercession for us.**
Be merciful, **Spare us, O Lord.**
Be merciful, **Graciously hear us, O Lord.**
From all evil, **O Lord, deliver us.**
From all sin,
From Thy wrath,
From sudden and unlooked for death,
From the snares of the devil,
From anger, and hatred, and every evil will,
From the spirit of fornication,
From lightning and tempest,
From the scourge of earthquakes,
From plague, famine and war,
From everlasting death,
Through the mystery of Thy holy Incarnation,
Through Thy Coming,
Through Thy Birth,
Through Thy Baptism and holy Fasting,
Through Thy Cross and Passion,
Through Thy Death and Burial,
Through Thy holy Resurrection,
Through Thine admirable Ascension,
Through the coming of the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete.
In the day of judgment.
We sinners, **Beseech Thee, hear us.**
That Thou wouldst spare us, **We beseech Thee, hear us.**

That Thou wouldst pardon us,
That Thou wouldst bring us to true penance,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to govern and preserve Thy holy Church,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to preserve our Apostolic Prelate, and all orders of the Church in holy religion,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to humble the enemies of holy Church,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to give peace and true concord to Christian kings and princes,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to grant peace and unity to the whole Christian world,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to confirm and preserve us in Thy holy service,
That Thou wouldst lift up our minds to heavenly desires,
That Thou wouldst render eternal blessings to all our benefactors,
That Thou wouldst deliver our souls, and the souls of our brethren, relations, and benefactors, from eternal damnation,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to give and preserve the fruits of the earth,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to grant eternal rest to all the faithful departed,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe graciously to hear us,
Son of God,
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, **spare us, O Lord.**

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Encyclical on the Catholic Priesthood

from Pope Pius XI

December 20, 1935

addressed to Catholic Priests and Seminarians

Ad Catholici Sacerdotii



To you dear Children, Priests of the Most High, both secular and regular, the world over, We address Our words. You are "Our glory and joy," you, who with such great generosity bear the "burden of the day and the heat," you, who so powerfully help Us and Our Brethren of the Episcopate in fulfilling the duty of feeding the flock of Christ. To you We send Our Paternal thanks and Our warmest encouragement. We know and fully appreciate your admirable zeal; and to it, in the needs of the present, We make this heartfelt appeal. These needs are becoming daily graver. All the more must your redeeming work grow and intensify; for "you are the salt of the earth, and the light of the world."

Holiness of Life

If, however, your work is to be blessed by God and produce abundant fruit, it must be rooted in holiness of life. Sanctity, as We said above, is the chief and most important endowment of the Catholic priest. Without it other gifts will not go far; with it, even supposing other gifts be meager, the priest can work marvels. We have the example of St. Joseph of Cupertino, and in times nearer to our own, of that humble Cure' d'Ars, St. John Mary Vianney, of whom We have already spoken; whom we have willed to set up before all parish priests as their model and heavenly Patron. Therefore, with the Apostle of the Gentiles, We say to you: "Behold your vocation"; and beholding it, you cannot fail to value ever more highly the grace given to you in ordination to strive to "walk worthily of the vocation in which you are called."

Retreats and Days of Recollection

In this striving you will be most wonderfully helped by a practice commended by Our Predecessor of holy memory Pius X. This commendation is contained in that "Exhortation to the Catholic Clergy," which he wrote with such great unction and affection. This We warmly recommend you to read. In it, among all the means to preserve and increase the grace of the priesthood, he placed first the use of the Spiritual Exercises. This means We Ourselves have also frequently recommended; and particularly in Our Encyclical Letter *Mens Nostra*, We have paternally and solemnly


urged it upon all Our sons, but more especially upon Our priests. As the year of Our priestly Jubilee drew to a close, We could find no better and more salutary reminder of that happy anniversary, than to give to Our sons an invitation, through the above-mentioned letter, to draw more copiously from the waters of life springing up into life everlasting, this inexhaustible fountain providentially opened by God to His Church. Again now, to you Our dear Brethren, who are all the closer to Us because you work more directly with Us to establish the kingdom of Christ upon earth, We believe We cannot give better proof of Our fatherly affection than by exhorting you most fervently to make use of this means of sanctification to the best of your abilities. Take for your guide those principles and norms laid down by Us in the above-mentioned Encyclical. It is not enough to withdraw to the sacred seclusion of the Spiritual Exercises only at the intervals and in the exact measure prescribed by ecclesiastical law, but you should enter into retreat more often and for longer periods, as far as possible, and you should consecrate, in addition, a day of each month to more fervent prayer and greater recollection, according to the practice of priests of greater zeal.

In such retreats and recollection even one who may have entered *in sortem Domini*, not by the straight way of a true vocation, but for earthly or less noble motives, will be able to "stir up the grace of God." For he too is now indissolubly bound to God and the Church, and so nothing remains for him but to follow the advice of St. Bernard: "If sanctity of life did not precede, let it at least follow ... for the future make good your ways and ambitions and make holy your ministry." The grace of God, and specifically that grace proper to the Sacrament of Holy Orders, will not fail to lend aid, if he sincerely wishes to correct whatever was originally amiss in his purpose or conduct. However it may have come about that he undertook the obligations of the priesthood, the abiding grace of this divine sacrament will not be wanting in power to enable him to fulfill them.

Each and all of you, the, from the recollection and prayer of a retreat will come out fortified against the snares of the world, quickened by lively zeal for the salvation of souls, and enkindled with the love of God, as befits priests in times like the present. For, together with so much corruption and diabolical malice, there is everywhere felt a powerful religious and spiritual awakening, a breath of the Holy spirit, sent forth over the world to sanctify it, and to renew with its creative force the face of the earth. Filled with the Holy Ghost you will communicate this love of God like a holy fire to all who approach you, becoming in a true sense bearers of Christ in a disordered society, which can hope for salvation from Jesus Christ alone, since He, and He alone, is ever "the true Savior of the world."

Seminarians

Before concluding, We turn Our thoughts and Our words with very



special tenderness to you who are still in your studies for the priesthood; and urge you from the depth of Our heart to prepare yourselves with all seriousness for the great task to which God calls you. You are the hope of the Church and of the people, who look for so much, or rather everything, to you. For to you they look for that living and life-giving knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, in which is eternal life. In piety, purity, humility, obedience, discipline and study strive, the, to make yourselves priests after the Heart of God; We assure you that in the task of fitting yourselves for the priesthood by solid virtue and learning, no care, no diligence, no energy, can be too great; because upon it so largely depend all your future apostolic labors. See to it that, on the day of your ordination to the priesthood, the Church find you in fact such as she wishes you to be, that is, "replenished with heavenly wisdom, irreproachable in life and established in the ways of grace," so that "the sweet odor of your life may be a delight to the Church of Christ, that both by word and good example you may build the house, that is, the family of God."

Only thus can you continue the glorious traditions of the Catholic priesthood and hasten that most auspicious hour when it will be given to all humanity to enjoy the fruits of the peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ.

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The Consecration of a Bishop

According to the Roman Pontifical
dated 30 March 1892
+ Michael Augustinus
Archiepiscopus Neo-Eboraci

Introduction

The liturgy of the Consecration of a Bishop may properly be divided into:

1. the preliminary examination,
2. the consecration proper, and
3. the investiture.

The first part includes the form of ascertaining solemnly that the Bishop-elect has the right to Episcopal consecration; of receiving his oath of submission to the Holy See, the centre of unity; and of inquiring to the orthodoxy of his faith. The form of oath embodied in this document is that prescribed for the Bishops of the United States in the Second Council of Baltimore. In the examination the Bishop-elect is made to profess categorically his belief in the different matters of faith that have been particularly attacked by heretics, especially the doctrine of the Incarnation. These preliminaries having been duly gone through with, the Mass is begun, its simultaneous celebration by Consecrator and Bishop-elect betokening the unity of their faith.

Immediately after the Gradual or Tract, the Consecration ceremony begins with the solemn announcement by the Consecrator of the awful duties of a Bishop. The different rites and prayers sufficiently indicate their purpose. The majesty of the plain chant in the Litanies, the Veni Creator, and the Preface is perhaps unsurpassed by any other portion of the liturgy.

The Consecration ceremony proper being finished, the new Bishop is invested with the crosier and ring proper to the Episcopal order, the prayers and admonitions accompanying the investiture clearly indicating their uses and purposes.

The Mass proceeds with the Consecrator and new Bishop celebrating in unison at the same altar. After the Communion (the new Bishop communicating both of the Sacred Host and Precious Blood) the new Bishop receives the mitre and gloves, which have been solemnly blessed by the Consecrator. Then with the utmost pomp the new Bishop is enthroned on the Episcopal seat while the magnificent *Te Deum* is intoned. During the hymn he is led between

the two assistant Bishops around the church, blessing the people as he goes. Afterward he is received by the Consecrator to the kiss of peace, and the function is ended.

Those only who appreciate the hierarchical importance of the Episcopate will thoroughly understand the sublimity of the whole ceremony.

Feast of St John de Matha, 1894.

The Consecration of a Bishop

No one is to be consecrated unless first the Consecrator shall be sure of the commission to consecrate, either by apostolic letters, if he be outside the *curia*, or by verbal commission given by the Sovereign Pontiff to the Consecrator, if the Consecrator himself be a cardinal. The day chosen for consecration should be a Sunday or the feast day of one of the apostles, (in Liturgy the Feast of an Evangelist is equivalent to that of an Apostle.), or it may be even a feast day if the Sovereign Pontiff shall have made this special concession; and it is fitting that both the Consecrator and the elect should fast on the preceding day. If the consecration be performed outside of the Roman *curia*, it should be held in the diocese to which the Bishop-elect has been promoted, or within the province, if it can be conveniently done. In the church where the consecration is to take place two chapels are prepared, a larger one for the consecrating bishop, and a smaller one for the Bishop-elect. And in the larger, upon the altar, prepared in the usual manner, a cross is placed in the middle, and at least four candlesticks. On the ground at the foot of the altar carpets are laid, upon which the Bishop-elect shall prostrate himself, but the Consecrator is also prepared, upon which will be a clean cloth, two candlesticks, basins, and towels for the ablution of the hands, a vessel with holy water, and an aspersorium; and a thurible with boat, spoon and incense, if the office is sung, otherwise this is omitted; cruets with wine and water for the sacrifice; a chalice; the box of hosts; crumbs of bread for the cleansing of the hands; holy chrism. Furthermore, all the pontifical vestments of color suitable to the time and the office of the Mass, namely, sandals and amice, alb, cincture, pectoral cross, stole, tunic, dalmatic, gloves, chasuble, precious mitre, pontifical ring, pastoral staff, maniple and gremial. A faldstool is prepared for the Consecrator and three seats for the Bishop-elect and the two assistant bishops; a Missal and a Pontifical. The Consecrator should have at least three chaplains in surplice, and two acolytes at the credence. In the smaller chapel for the Bishop-elect, which should be distinct from the larger, an altar is prepared with a cross and two candlesticks, a Missal and a Pontifical, and all the pontifical vestments in white, as enumerated above for the Consecrator, and in addition to these a white cope; near the altar a smaller credence with a clean cloth, vessels for washing the hands, and bread crumbs for cleansing the hands and head. Eight small strips from two rolls of fine linen (cut in lengths

through the middle, of which two are each six palms in length, the remaining six being of equal quantity) are prepared, and at least eight candles, each one pound in weight, four of which are placed on the altar of the consecrating bishop, two upon his credence and two upon the altar of the Bishop-elect; a jeweled ring to be blessed and to be given to the Bishop-elect; and an ivory comb. For the offertory, two torches four pounds each in weight, two loaves of bread, two small barrels of wine; the bread and the wine are to be ornamented, two to be decorated with silver and two with gold, bearing the escutcheons of the Consecrator and of the Bishop-elect, with hat, or cross, or mitre, according to the grade and dignity of each. At least two assistant bishops shall be present (The presence of three Bishops is required by the ancient Canons, and by the general practice of the Church, but is not essential to the validity of the consecration. By special dispensation priests may assist in lieu of Bishops.) who are clothed in the rochet, and if they are regulars, in the surplice, the amice, stole, cope and the plain white mitre, and each one has his Pontifical. At a suitable hour the Consecrator, the Bishop-elect, the assistant bishops, and the others who are to be present at the consecration, assemble at the church, and the Consecrator, having prayed before the altar, ascends to his throne if he is in his own diocese, or goes to his chapel, to the faldstool near the Epistle corner, and there is vested as usual. The Bishop-elect, with the assistant bishops goes to his chapel and there puts on the necessary vestments, namely, if the Mass be sung, the amice, alb, cincture and the stole, crossed as it is worn by priests. If, however, the office is read, he can, before he takes the above mentioned vestments, put on the sandals and read the Psalm "**Quam Dilecta**," etc. The assistant bishops, in the meanwhile, put on the vestments as above. All being ready the Consecrator goes to the middle of the altar and there sits on the faldstool with his back to the altar. The Bishop-elect, vested and wearing his biretta, is led between the two assistant bishops vested and mitred, and when he comes before the Consecrator, uncovering his head and profoundly bowing, he makes a reverence to him, the assistant bishops with their mitres on slightly inclining their heads. Then they sit at a little distance from the Consecrator so that the Bishop-elect faces the Consecrator; the senior assistant bishop sits at the right hand of the Bishop-elect, the junior at his left, facing one another. When they shall have thus been seated, after a short pause they rise, the Bishop-elect without his biretta and the assistant bishops without their mitres, and the senior assistant, turned to the Consecrator, says:

Most Reverend Father, our holy Mother the Catholic Church, asks that you promote this priest here present to the burden of the episcopate.

The Consecrator says:

Have you the Apostolic Mandate?

The senior assistant bishop answers:

We have.

The Consecrator says:

Let it be read.

Then the notary of the Consecrator, taking the mandate from the assistant bishop, reads it from the beginning to the end : in the meanwhile all sit with heads covered. The mandate having been read, the Consecrator says:

Thanks be to God.

Or, if the consecration is made by virtue of Apostolic letters, by which even the reception of the oath to be made by the Bishop-elect is committed to the Consecrator, these letters being read, before the Consecrator says anything else, the Bishop-elect coming from his seat, kneels before the Consecrator and reads, word for word, the oath to be taken according to the tenor of the aforesaid commission, in this manner, viz:

Form of Oath

IN., elected to the Church of N., from this hour henceforward will be obedient to Blessed Peter the Apostle, and to the holy Roman Church, and to our Holy Father, Pope N. and to his successors canonically elected. I will assist them to retain and to defend the Roman Papacy without detriment to my order. I shall take care to preserve, to defend, increase and promote the rights, honors, privileges and authority of the holy Roman Church, of our Lord, the Pope, and of his aforesaid successors. I shall observe with all my strength, and shall cause to be observed by others, the rules of the holy Fathers, the Apostolic decrees, ordinances or dispositions, reservations, provisions and mandates. I shall come when called to a Synod, unless prevented by a canonical impediment. I shall make personally the visit *ad limina apostolorum* every ten years, and I shall render to our Holy Father, Pope N., and to his aforesaid successors an account of my whole pastoral office, and of all things pertaining in any manner whatsoever to the state of my Church, to the discipline of the clergy and the people, and finally to the salvation of the souls which are entrusted to me : and in turn I shall receive humbly the apostolic mandates and execute them as diligently as possible. But if I shall be detained by legitimate impediment, I shall fulfil all the aforesaid things through a designated delegate having a special mandate for this purpose, a priest of my diocese, or through some other secular or regular priest of known

probity and religion, fully informed concerning the above-named things. I shall not sell, nor give, nor mortgage the possessions belonging to my *mensa* (by *mensa* is understood the real estate or investments set aside for the proper support of the Bishop), nor shall I enfeoff them anew or alienate them in any manner, even with the consent of the chapter of my Church, without consulting the Roman Pontiff. And if through me any such alienation shall occur, I wish, by the very fact, to incur the punishments contained in the constitution published concerning this matter.

The Consecrator, holding in his lap with both hands the books of the Gospels, opened towards the Bishop-elect, receives from him this oath, the Bishop-elect still kneeling before him saying:

So help me God and these Holy Gospels of God.

He touches with both hands the text of the Gospels and then, and not before, the Consecrator says:

Thanks be to God.

Then the Bishop-elect and the assistants being seated, the Consecrator reads in an audible voice the following examination, which should always be read as it is written, in the singular, even if many are examined together. The assistant bishops say in a lower voice whatsoever the Consecrator says, and all should retain their mitres and be seated.

Examination

The ancient rule of the holy Fathers teaches and ordains that he who is chosen to the order of bishop, shall be with all charity examined diligently beforehand concerning his faith in the Holy Trinity, and shall be questioned concerning the different objects and rules which pertain to this government and are to be observed, according to the word of the apostle: "impose hands hastily on no man." This is done in order that he who is to be ordained may be instructed how it behooveth one placed under this rule to conduct himself in the Church of God, and also that they may be blameless who impose on him the hands of ordination. Therefore by the same authority and commandment, with sincere charity, we ask you, dearest brother, if you desire to make your conduct harmonize, as far as your nature allows, with the meaning of divine Scripture.

Then the Bishop-elect, rising slightly, with uncovered head, answers:

With my whole heart I wish in all things to consent and obey.

And he will act in like manner when making all the other

responses that follow, and if there are many Bishops-elect, each one will answer thus in turn.

The Consecrator interrogates.

Q. Will you teach the people for whom you are ordained, both by words and by example, the things you understand from the divine Scriptures?

R. I will.

Q. Will you receive, keep and teach with reverence the traditions of the orthodox fathers and the decretal constitutions of the Holy and Apostolic See?

R. I will.

Q. Will you exhibit in all things fidelity, submission, obedience, according to canonical authority, to Blessed Peter the Apostle, to whom was given by God the power of binding and of loosing, and to his Vicar our Holy Father, Pope N. and to his successors the Roman Pontiffs?

R. I will.

Q. Will you refrain in all your ways from evil and, as far as you are able, with the help of the Lord, direct them to every good?

R. I will.

Q. Will you observe and teach with the help of God, chastity and sobriety?

R. I will.

Q. Will you, as far as your human frailty shall allow, always be given up to divine affairs and abstain from worldly matters or sordid gains?

R. I will.

Q. Will you, for the Lord's sake, be affable and merciful to the poor and to pilgrims and all those in need?

R. I will.

Then the Consecrator says to him:

May the Lord bestow upon thee all these things and every other good thing, and preserve thee and strengthen thee in all goodness.

And all answer: Amen.

Q. Do you believe, according to your understanding and the capacity of your mind, in the Holy Trinity, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, one God almighty and the whole Godhead, in the Holy Trinity coessential, consubstantial, coeternal, and coomnipotent, of one will, power and majesty, the Creator of all creatures, by whom are all things, through whom are all things, and in whom are all things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, corporeal and spiritual?

R. I assent and do so believe.

Q. Do you believe each single person of the Holy Trinity is one God, true, full and perfect?

R. I do believe.

Q. Do you believe in the Son of God, the Word of God eternally begotten of the Father, consubstantial, coomnipotent and coequal in all things to the Father in divinity, born in time of the Holy Ghost from Mary ever Virgin, with a rational soul, having two nativities, one eternal from the Father, the other temporal from the Mother, true God and true Man, proper and perfect in both natures, not the adopted nor the fantastic, but the sole and only Son of God in two natures and of two natures, but in the singleness of one person, incapable of suffering, and immortal in his divinity, but Who suffered in his humanity for us and for our salvation, with real suffering of the flesh, and was buried, and, rising on the third day from the dead with a true resurrection of the flesh, on the fortieth day after resurrection, with the flesh wherein He rose and with His soul, ascended into Heaven and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, thence to come to judge the living and the dead, and to render to everyone according to his works as they shall have been good or bad?

R. I assent and so in all things do I believe.

Q. Do you believe also in the Holy Ghost full and perfect and true God proceeding from the Father and the Son, coequal and coessential, coomnipotent and coeternal in all things with the Father and the Son?

R. I believe.

Q. Do you believe that this Holy Trinity is not three Gods, but one God, almighty, eternal, invisible and unchangeable?

R. I believe.

Q. Do you believe that the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church is the one true Church in which there is but one true baptism and the true remission of all sins?

R. I believe.

Q. Do you also anathematize every heresy that shall arise against this holy Catholic Church?

R. I do anathematize it.

Q. Do you believe also in the true resurrection of this same flesh of yours, and in life everlasting?

R. I do believe.

Q. Do you believe also that god and the Lord Almighty is the sole author of the New and Old Testaments, of the Law, and of the Prophets, and of the Apostles?

R. I do believe.

Afterwards the Consecrator says:

May this faith be increased in thee, by the Lord, unto true and eternal happiness, dearest brother in Christ.

All answer: Amen.

The examination being finished, the aforesaid assistant bishops lead the Bishop-elect to the Consecrator, whose hand is reverently kissed by the Bishop-elect kneeling. Then the Consecrator, laying aside his mitre, and turning towards the altar with the ministers, says in the usual manner the Confession, the Bishop-elect remaining at his left hand, and the bishops standing before their seats say in like manner the Confession, with their chaplains. Having finished the Confession the Consecrator ascends to the altar, kisses it and the Gospel to be said in the Mass, and incenses the altar in the usual manner. Then he goes to his throne or faldstool and proceeds with the Mass up to the **Alleluia**, or the last verse of the tract or sequence exclusive.

If Mass is read, however, having kissed the altar and the Gospel, the incensation being omitted, he reads as above from the Missal at the altar, after which, whether the Mass is read or sung, he returns with his mitre on to the faldstool, placed for him before the middle of the altar.

The assistant bishops lead the Bishop-elect to his chapel, and there having laid aside the cope, acolytes put on his sandals, if he has not already done so, he reading the usual psalms and prayers. Then he

receives the pectoral cross and adjusts the stole in such a manner that it may hang from his shoulders. After that, he is vested with the tunic, dalmatic, chasuble and maniple, and then advances to his altar, where, standing between the assistant bishops, with uncovered head, he reads the whole office of the Mass up to the **Alleluia**, or the last verse of the tract or sequence exclusive. He does not turn around to the people when he says **The Lord be with you**, as is wont to be done in other masses.

The office of the day is never changed on account of the ordination of bishops. But after the collect of the day, a collect for the Bishop-elect is said under one **Through Christ Our Lord, etc.**

Prayer

Attend to our supplications, Almighty God, so that what is to be performed by our humble ministry may be fulfilled by the effect of Thy power. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. R. Amen.

The Gradual being finished, if the **Alleluia** is said, otherwise the tract or sequence up to the last verse exclusively being read, the Consecrator goes to the faldstool before the middle of the altar and there sits with his mitre on (The wearing of the mitre indicates the exercise of episcopal authority. By bearing this in mind the importance of these Rubrics, concerning the putting on and removal of the Mitre, will be better appreciated). The assistant bishops again lead the Bishop-elect to the Consecrator, to whom the Bishop-elect, having laid aside his biretta, (It will be observed that the Elect removes his biretta as a sign of respect for the superior authority of the Bishop), profoundly bending his head, makes a humble reverence; the assistants with their mitres on, and bowing slightly, also make a reverence to the Consecrator, then all sit as before, and the Consecrator, sitting with his mitre on, turned towards the Bishop-elect, says:

A bishop judges, interprets, consecrates, ordains, offers, baptizes and confirms.

Then all rising, the Consecrator, standing with his mitre on, says to those surrounding him:

Let us pray, dearest brethren, that the kindness of the Almighty God consulting the utility of His Church, may bestow the abundance of His grace upon this Elect. Through Christ Our Lord. R. Amen.

And then the Consecrator before his faldstool; and the assistant bishops before theirs, all with their mitres on, prostrate themselves. The Bishop-elect, however, prostrates himself at the left of the Consecrator; the ministers and all others kneel. Then the chanter,

or if the office is read, the Consecrator, beginning the litanies, says:

Lord have mercy on us (going through the entire litanies.)

After the petition, **That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to all the faithful departed, etc.** R. We beseech Thee, hear us, has been said,

The Consecrator, rising and turning towards the Bishop-elect, holding in his left hand the pastoral staff, says in the tone of the litanies, first:

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to + bless this Elect here present. R. We beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to + bless and + sanctify this Elect here present. R. We beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to + bless and + sanctify and + consecrate this Elect here present. R. We beseech Thee, hear us.

Meanwhile always making the sign of the cross over him, and the assistant bishops do and say the same thing, remaining kneeling, however.

Then the Consecrator again prostrates himself, and the chanter, or he who began the litanies, continues them to the end.

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe, etc. R. We beseech Thee, hear us.

The litany finished, all rise; and the Consecrator stands with his mitre on before his faldstool, the Bishop-elect kneeling before him.

Then the Consecrator, with the aid of the assistant bishops, taking the open book of the Gospels, saying nothing, lays it upon the neck and shoulders of the Bishop-elect, so that the printed page touches the neck. One of the chaplains kneels behind, supporting the book until it must be given into the hands of the Bishop-elect.

Then the Consecrator and the assistant bishops touch with both hands the head of the one to be consecrated saying: (The imposition of hands with prayer is the essential rite by which Episcopal power is conferred.)

Receive the Holy Ghost.

This being done, the Consecrator, standing and laying aside his mitre, says:

Be propitious, O Lord, to our supplications, and inclining the horn of sacerdotal grace above this Thy servant, pour out upon him the power of Thy + blessing. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God.

Then extending his hands before his breast, he says:

World without end.

R. Amen

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

V. Lift up your hearts.

R. We have them lifted up to the Lord.

V. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

R. It is worthy and just.

It is truly worthy and just, right and profitable unto salvation that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto Thee, O holy Lord, Father Almighty, Eternal God, honor of all dignities which serve unto Thy glory in sacred orders. To Thee O God, who, in the secret communings of familiar intercourse, giving instruction unto Moses Thy servant, concerning, among other branches of divine worship, the nature of sacerdotal vesture, didst order that Aaron, Thy chosen one, should be clad in mystic robes during the sacred functions, so that succeeding generations might be enlightened by the examples of their predecessors, lest the knowledge derived from Thy instruction should be wanting in any age. Since, indeed, with the ancients, the very appearance of symbols would obtain reverence, and with us there would be the experience of the things themselves more certain that the mysteries of figures. For the adornment of our minds fulfils what was expressed by the outward vesture of that ancient priesthood, and now brightness of souls rather than splendor of raiment commends the pontifical glory unto us. Because even those things which then were sightly unto the eyes of the flesh, demanded rather that the eyes of the spirit should understand the things they signified. And therefore we beseech Thee, O Lord, give bountifully this grace to this Thy servant, whom Thou hast chosen to the ministry of the supreme priesthood, so that what things soever those vestments signify by the refulgence of gold, the splendor of jewels, and the variety of diversified works,

these may shine forth in his character and his actions. Fill up in Thy priest the perfection of Thy ministry and sanctify with the dew of Thy heavenly ointment this Thy servant decked out with the ornaments of all beauty.

If the Consecration is performed in the Roman curia, the Apostolic Subdeacon or one of the pontifical chaplains binds the head of the Bishop-elect with one of the longer cloths from the eight mentioned above, and the Consecrator, prostrate on both knees, turned towards the altar, begins the Hymn, **Come Holy Ghost, Creator, come**, the others continuing it unto the end.

At the conclusion of the first verse, the bishop rises and sits on the faldstool before the middle of the altar, takes his mitre, lays aside his ring and gloves, puts on the ring again and receives the gremial from the ministers. Then he dips the thumb of his right hand in the holy chrism and anoints the head of the Bishop-elect kneeling before him, making first the sign of the cross on the crown, then anointing the rest of the crown, saying in the meanwhile:

May thy head be anointed and consecrated by heavenly benediction in the pontifical order.

And making with his right hand, the sign of the cross three times over the head of the Elect, he says:

In the name of the + Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy + Ghost. R. Amen.

V. Peace be with thee.

R. And with thy spirit.

And if several are to be consecrated, he repeats this to each separately.

Having completed the anointing, the bishop cleanses his thumb somewhat with bread crumbs, and the above-mentioned hymn having been finished, he lays aside his mitre, rises and continues in the same tone as before, saying:

May this, O Lord, flow abundantly upon his head, may this run down upon his cheeks, may this extend unto the extremities of his whole body, so that inwardly he may be filled with the power of Thy spirit, and outwardly may be clothed with that same spirit. May constant faith, pure love, sincere piety abound in him. May his feet by Thy gift be beautiful for announcing the glad tidings of peace, for announcing the glad tidings of Thy good things. Grant to him, O Lord, the ministry of reconciliation in word and in deed, in the power of signs and of wonders. Let his speech and his preaching be not in the persuasive words of human

wisdom, but in the showing of the spirit and of power. Give to him, O Lord, the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, so that he may make use of, not boast of the power which Thou bestowest unto edification, not unto destruction. Whatsoever he shall bind upon earth, let it be bound likewise in heaven, and whatsoever he shall loose upon earth, let it likewise be loosed in heaven. Whose sins he shall retain, let them be retained, and do Thou remit the sins of whomsoever he shall remit. Let him who shall curse him, himself be accursed, and let him who shall bless him be filled with blessings. Let him be the faithful and prudent servant whom Thou dost set, O Lord, over Thy household, so that he may give them food in due season, and prove himself a perfect man. May he be untiring in his solicitude, fervent in spirit. May he detest pride, and cherish humility and truth, and never desert it, overcome either by flattery or by fear. Let him not put light for darkness, nor darkness for light : let him not call evil good, nor good evil. May he be a debtor to the wise and to the foolish, so that he may gather fruit from the progress of all. Grant to him, O Lord, an Episcopal chair for ruling Thy Church and the people committed to him. Be his authority, be his power, be his strength. Multiply upon him Thy + blessing and Thy grace, so that Thy gift he may be fitted for always obtaining Thy mercy, and by Thy grace may be faithful.

Then in a lower tone of voice he reads the following so as to be heard by those surrounding him:

Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth in the unity of one God, world without end. R. Amen.

After this the Consecrator begins, and the choir takes up the Antiphon.

The ointment upon the head which descended on the beard, the beard of Aaron, which descended on the border of his vestment : the Lord hath commanded blessing forever.

Psalm 132

Behold how good and how pleasing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity: Like the precious ointment on the head, that ran down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron. Which ran down to the skirt of his garment : as the dew of Hermon, which descendeth upon mount Sion. For there the Lord hath commanded blessing, and life for evermore. Glory be to the Father, etc. As it was in the beginning, etc.

Then the whole Antiphon is repeated, **The ointment upon the head, etc.**

The Antiphon before the psalm having been begun, one of the

longer strips from the eight above mentioned, is placed on the neck of the Bishop-elect. The Consecrator sits down, takes his mitre, whilst the Bishop-elect kneels before him, having his hands joined. Then the Consecrator anoints with chrism the hands of the Bishop-elect in the form of a cross, by drawing two lines with the thumb of his right hand, which has been dipped in the oil, namely, from the thumb of the right hand to the index finger of the left, and from the thumb of the left hand to the index finger of the right. And afterwards he anoints the entire palms of the Bishop-elect, saying:

May these hands be anointed with the sanctified oil and the chrism of sanctification, as Samuel anointed David to be King and Prophet; so may they be anointed and consecrated.

And making with his right hand the sign of the cross thrice over the hands of the Bishop-elect, he says:

In the name of God the + Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy + Ghost, making the image of the Holy cross of Our Savior Jesus Christ, Who has redeemed us from death and led us to the kingdom of Heaven. Hear us, O loving, Almighty Father, Eternal God, and grant that we may obtain what we ask for. Through the same Christ Our Lord. R. Amen.

Sitting down, he continues:

May God and the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath Himself of the Episcopate, bedew thee with chrism and with the liquor of mystic ointment, and make thee fruitful with the richness of spiritual + benediction : Whatsoever you shall + bless may it be blessed, and whatsoever you shall sanctify may it be sanctified; and may the imposition of this consecrated hand or thumb be profitable in all things unto salvation. R. Amen.

After this, the one consecrated joins both hands, the right resting upon the left, and places them upon the cloth hanging from his neck. The Consecrator cleanses his thumb somewhat with some bread crumbs, and laying aside his mitre, rises and blesses the pastoral staff, if it has not been blessed, saying:

Let Us Pray

O God, who dost sustain human weakness, bless + this staff; and in the clemency of Thy merciful kindness, operate inwardly in the manners of this Thy servant, what it outwardly designates. Through Christ Our Lord. R. Amen.

Then he sprinkles it with holy water. Sitting down and taking his mitre, he himself hands the staff to the one consecrated, who is

kneeling before him, and who receives it between the index and middle fingers, the hands remaining joined, while the Consecrator says:

Receive the staff of the pastoral office, so that in the correction of vices you may be lovingly severe, giving judgment without wrath, softening the minds of your hearers whilst fostering virtues, not neglecting strictness of discipline through love of tranquillity. R. Amen.

After which, laying aside the mitre, the Consecrator rises and blesses the ring, if it has not been blessed before, saying:

Let Us Pray

O Lord, Creator and Preserver of the human race, Giver of spiritual grace, Bestower of eternal salvation, do Thou send forth Thy + blessing upon this ring; so that whosoever shall be adorned with this sign of holiest fidelity, it may avail him by the power of heavenly protection unto eternal life. Through Christ Our Lord. R. Amen.

He then sprinkles the ring with holy water, and sitting with his mitre on, himself places the ring on the ring finger of the right hand of the one consecrated, saying:

Receive the ring, the symbol of fidelity, in order that, adorned with unspotted faith, you may keep inviolably the Spouse of God, namely, His Holy Church. R. Amen.

Then the Consecrator takes the book of the Gospels from the shoulders of the one consecrated, and with the aid of the assistant bishops, hands it closed to the one consecrated, the latter touching it without opening his hands, whilst the Consecrator says:

Receive the Gospel and go preach to the people committed to thee, for God is powerful to increase his grace in thee, He who liveth and reigneth, world without end. R. Amen.

Finally the Consecrator receives the one consecrated to the kiss of peace. The Assistant bishops each do likewise, saying to the one consecrated:

Peace be with thee.

And he answers to each:

And with thy spirit.

Then the one consecrated, between the assistant bishops, returns to his chapel, where, while he is seated, his head is cleansed with

some bread crumbs and with a clean cloth. Then his hair is cleansed, and combed; afterwards he washes his hands. The Consecrator washes his hands at his faldstool. Then he goes on with the Mass up to the Offertory inclusive. The consecrated does the same in his chapel.

The Offertory having been said, the Consecrator sits with his mitre on at the faldstool before the middle of the altar, and the one consecrated, coming from his chapel, between the assistant bishops, kneels before the Consecrator and offers to him two lighted torches, two loaves of bread and two small barrels of wine, and kisses reverently the hands of the Consecrator receiving the above gifts.

Then the Consecrator washes his hands and goes to the altar. The one consecrated also goes to the Epistle side of the same altar : there, standing between the assistant bishops, having before him his Missal, he says and does with the Consecrator everything as in the Missal. And one host is prepared to be consecrated for the Consecrator and the one consecrated, and wine sufficient for both is placed in the chalice.

The following Secret is said with the Secret of the Mass of the day under on Through Our Lord by the Consecrator.

Secret

Receive, O Lord, the gifts which we offer to Thee for this Thy servant, and kindly preserve in him Thy favors. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. R. Amen.

The one consecrated says:

Secret

Receive, O Lord, the gifts which we offer to Thee for me, Thy servant, and kindly preserve Thy favors in me. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. R. Amen.

During the action the Consecrator says:

This oblation therefore, of our service, and that of Thy whole family which we offer Thee, also for this Thy servant, whom Thou hast vouchsafed to promote to the order of the episcopate, we beseech Thee, O Lord, graciously to accept, and to kindly preserve Thy favors in him, so that what has been accomplished by the divine gift, may be followed by divine effects : and dispose our days in Thy peace, and command us to be delivered from eternal damnation, and to

be numbered in the flock of Thine elect. Through Christ Our Lord. R. Amen.

The one consecrated says:

This oblation therefore, of our service, and that of Thy whole family which we offer Thee, also for me Thy servant, whom Thou hast vouchsafed to promote to the order of bishop, we beseech Thee, O Lord, graciously to accept and kindly to preserve in me Thy favors, so that what I have accomplished by the divine gift, I may complete by divine effects : and dispose our days in Thy peace, and command us to be delivered from eternal damnation and to numbered in the flock of Thine elect. Through Christ Our Lord. R. Amen.

The prayer **Lord Jesus Christ, who, etc.** having been said by the Consecrator and the one consecrated, the latter goes up to the right of the Consecrator and both kiss the altar. Then the Consecrator gives the kiss of peace to the one consecrated saying:

Peace be with thee.

To whom the one consecrated answers:

And with thy spirit

Then after the Consecrator has consumed the Body of the Lord, he does not entirely consume the blood, but only a portion with the particle of the host that has been placed in the chalice, and before he takes the purification, he communicates the one consecrated, who stands with bowed head and not genuflecting, first giving him the Body and then the Blood. Then he purifies himself and afterwards the one consecrated. He then washes his fingers over the chalice and takes also the ablution, and having received the mitre, he washes his hands. Meanwhile, the one consecrated, with his assistant bishops, goes to the other corner of the altar, namely, the Gospel side, and there continues the Mass while the Consecrator does the same at the Epistle side.

The Post-Communion which ought to be said with the Post-Communion of the day under one **Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth.**

We beseech Thee, O Lord, work in us the saving fullness of Thy mercy : and propitiously render us so perfect, and so cherish us that we may be able to please Thee in all things. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, who with Thee liveth and reigneth in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. R. Amen.

Then after **Go, the Mass is ended, or Let us bless the Lord,** as the time requires, has been said, the Consecrator having said **May**

the performance, etc., in the middle of the altar, and received there the mitre, if he be not an Archbishop, and in his province, turned towards the altar, he solemnly blesses the people, saying : **Blessed be the name of the Lord, etc.**

The Investiture

Having given the Benediction, the Consecrator, with his mitre on, sits on the faldstool which has been placed before the middle of the altar : the one consecrated, keeping his biretta on his head, kneels before him. Then the Consecrator, having laid aside his mitre, rises and blesses the mitre, if it has not been blessed, saying:

Let Us Pray

O Lord God, Father Almighty, whose goodness is wonderful and whose power immense, from whom is every best and every perfect gift, the ornament of all beauty, vouchsafe to + bless and + sanctify this mitre to be placed on the head of this Prelate Thy servant. Through Christ Our Lord. R. Amen.

And then he sprinkles it with holy water, after which, sitting down with his mitre on, the assistant bishops aiding him he places it on the head of the one consecrated, saying:

We, O Lord, place on the head of this Thy bishop and champion, the helmet of protection and salvation, so that his face being adorned and his head armed with the horns of both testaments, he may seem terrible to the opponents of truth, and through the indulgence of Thy grace may be their sturdy adversary, Thou Who didst mark with the brightest rays of Thy splendor and truth the countenance of Moses Thy Servant, ornamented from his fellowship with Thy word : and didst order the tiara to be placed on the head of Aaron thy high priest. Through Christ Our Lord. R. Amen.

Then if the gloves have not been blessed, the Consecrator rises, having laid aside the mitre, and blesses them, saying:

Let Us Pray

O Almighty Creator, Who hast given to man fashioned after Thy image, hands notable for their formation, as an organ of intelligence for correct workmanship : which Thou hast commanded to be kept clean, so that the soul might worthily be carried in them and Thy mysteries worthily consecrated by them, vouchsafe to + bless and + sanctify these hand coverings, so that whosoever of Thy ministers, the holy Bishops, shall humbly wish to cover their hands with these, Thy mercy shall accord to him cleanness of heart as well as

of deed. Through Christ Our Lord. R. Amen.

And he sprinkles them with holy water. Then the pontifical ring is drawn from the finger of the one consecrated, the Consecrator sits down and having received the mitre with the aid of the assistant bishops, places the gloves on the hands of the one consecrated, saying:

Encompass, O Lord, the hands of this Thy minister with the cleanness of the new man who descended from Heaven, so that as Thy beloved Jacob, his hands covered with the skins of young goats, implored and received the paternal benediction, having offered to his Father most agreeable food and drink, so also this one may deserve to implore and to receive the benediction of Thy grace by means of the saving host offered by his hands. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who in the likeness of sinful flesh, offered himself to Thee for us.

And immediately he places on the finger of the one consecrated the Episcopal ring. Then the Consecrator rises and takes the one consecrated by the right hand, and the senior assistant bishop takes him by the left, and they enthrone him by placing him sitting on the faldstool from which the Consecrator has risen, or if the ceremony be performed in the Church of the one consecrated, they enthrone him on the usual episcopal seat, and the Consecrator places in his left hand the pastoral staff.

Then the Consecrator, turning towards the altar and laying aside the mitre, while standing, begins, the others taking it up and finishing it, the Hymn, **We praise Thee, O Lord.**

At the beginning of the hymn, the one consecrated is led by the assistant bishops with their mitres on around the Church, and he blesses everyone. The Consecrator meanwhile without his mitre remains standing in the same place at the altar. When the one consecrated has returned to his seat or the faldstool, he sits again until the above mentioned hymn is finished. The assistants lay aside their mitres and stand with the Consecrator.

At the conclusion of the hymn, the Consecrator, standing without his mitre, at the throne, or the faldstool at the right hand of the one consecrated, says; or if the office be sung, he begins, the choir taking up the Antiphon.

May Thy hand be strengthened and Thy right hand be exalted, justice and judgment be the preparation of Thy throne. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.

And the whole Antiphon is repeated. When this is finished the

Consecrator says:

V. O Lord hear my prayer.
 R. And let my cry come unto Thee.
 V. The Lord be with you.
 R. And with thy spirit.

Let Us Pray

O God, the Pastor and Ruler of all the faithful, look down in Thy mercy upon this Thy servant, whom Thou hast appointed over Thy Church, and grant, we beseech Thee, that both by word and example, he may edify all those who are under his charge, so that with the flock intrusted to him, he may attain unto life everlasting. Through Christ Our Lord.
 R. Amen.

After which the Consecrator, with uncovered head, remains at the Gospel corner of the altar, the assistants, also uncovered, standing with him.

The one consecrated rises, and going with his mitre and his pastoral staff before the middle of the altar, turns towards it; and, signing himself with the thumb of his right hand before his breast, he says:

Blessed be the name of the Lord.
 R. Now and forever.

Then making the sign of the cross from his forehead to his breast, he says:

Our help is in the name of the Lord.
 R. Who hath made Heaven and earth.

Then raising and joining his hands, and bowing his head, he says:

May the Almighty God bless you.

And when he has said "God" he turns towards the people and blesses them thrice, saying:

The + Father, the + Son and the Holy + Ghost. R. Amen.

Then the Consecrator takes his mitre, and stands at the Gospel corner, his face turned towards the Epistle corner. The assistants, with their mitres on, stand near him. The one consecrated goes to the epistle corner of the altar, and there with his mitre on, and holding his staff, facing the Consecrator, he makes a genuflection and sings:

For many years.



The going to the middle of the altar, he again genuflects as before, and says, singing in a higher voice:

For many years.

Afterwards he goes to the feet of the Consecrator and genuflecting a third time as above, he sings again in a still higher tone of voice:

For many years.

Then when he has risen, the Consecrator receives him to the kiss of peace. The assistant bishops do likewise. These lead between them the one consecrated, who wears his mitre and walks with the pastoral staff, reciting the Gospel of St. John, **In the beginning was the Word, etc.** After having made a reverence to the cross upon the altar he goes to his chapel, where he lays aside his vestments saying meanwhile the antiphon **Of the Three children, etc.**, and the canticle, "**Bless ye.**" The Consecrator, having given the kiss of peace to the one consecrated, says in a low voice:

The Lord be with you, The beginning of the Gospel according to St. John. In the beginning was the Word, etc.

He signs the altar and himself, and having made likewise a reverence to the cross, he lays aside his sacred vestments at the throne or the faldstool, saying also the antiphon **Of the three children** and the canticle "**Bless ye,**" etc., after which the one consecrated returns thanks to the Consecrator and his assistants, and all depart in peace.

Appendix

The Litany of the Saints

Veni Creator

Te Deum Laudamus

